MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

#272

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JANUARY 2006 — $4.00

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
#148, 150-151, 153-154, 156 pts. 1 & 2, 160-163, 166, 172, 174-175, 179-181, 184-210, 214-227, 229-271
See page 4 for pricing and other info.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!

AD DEADLINE (with payment) is the 15th of the month. Issue comes out by the 2nd week of following month, and the cover date is the month after that.

★★ AD RATES & SIZES!! ★★
1/6 page: (2.5" x 5") $30
1/3 page long: (2.5" x 10") $85
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1/2 page: (7.5" x 5") $150
Full page (7.5" x 10") $400

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TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TIM BROOKS

- THE WIPERS-Over the Edge-LP
- THE WIPERS-Rebels With a Cause-LP
- REGULATIONS-Electric Guitar-LP
- AS MERCENÁRIAS-LP
- REATARDS-Teenage Hate-LP
- TOKYO ELECTRON-LP
- I ATTACK-American Dream-EP
- HATEPINKS-Play the Songs...-EP
- CARBONAS-Waiting to Happen-EP
- BLACK LIPS-Let It BloomLP

MITCH CARDWELL

- BLACK LIPS-Let It BloomLP
- KNAUGHTY KNIGHTS-Death Has Come Over Me-EP
- V/A-No New York-LP
- TOKYO ELECTRON-LP
- REGULATIONS-Electric Guitar-LP
- AS MERCENÁRIAS-LP
- FLASCHEN-You're Negative Baby-EP
- PHOSPHOR-Granola-12"
- REATARDS/ANGRY ANGLES-live
- GRIS GRIS-live

ROB COONS

- REGULATIONS-LP / REATARDS-LP
- ACCION MUTANTE-Complete Discography-CD
- LEBENDEN TOTEN-State Laughter-12"
- RÖVSVETT-Roll-Mats Bjuder...1984-1987-LP
- HATEPINKS-Play the Songs...-EP
- THE WIPERS-Over the Edge-LP
- THE WIPERS-Rebels With a Cause-LP
- POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT-Skate and Create-EP
- CARBONAS-Waiting to Happen-EP
- THE CLIFTONS-Rock Out with My Cock Out-EP

PAUL CURRAN

- REGULATIONS-LP & Live
- AS MERCENÁRIAS-LP
- BENT OUTTA SHAPE-Stray Dog Town-LP
- SWING DING AMIGOS-Kings of Culo-LP
- KNAUGHTY KNIGHTS-Death Has Come Over Me-EP
- ANNALISE-Here's To Hope CD
- BAMBIX-Club Matuchek CD
- BEYOND PINK – "Jedan Dva, Jebla Te Ja" LP
- ASS-END OFFEND-Unchecked Aggression-EP
- STAJNAS LOBOS-Suburban Avengers CD

JONATHAN FLOYD

- DAN PADILLA / CHINESE TELEPHONES-EP
- BLACK LIPS-Let It Bloom-LP
- ANNALISE-Here's to Hope-CD
- PROPAGANDHI-Potemkin City Limits-CD
- CARBONAS-Waiting to Happen-EP
- KING LOUIE ONE MAN BAND-LP
- REGULATIONS-Electric Guitar-LP
- BENT OUTTA SHAPE-Stray Dog Town-LP
- SWING DING AMIGOS-Kings of Culo-LP
- WESTERN ADDICTION-Cognicide-CD

CHRIS HUBBARD

- AS MERCENÁRIAS-LP
- REGULATIONS-Electric Guitar-LP
- LEBENDEN TOTEN-State Laughter-12"
- POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT-Skate and Create-EP
- SADO-NATION-Future Past, Present, Tense-CD
- DESCONTROLADOS-Aburrimiento EP
- RADIO DEAD ONES-Holy Ghost-EP
- HELLSHOCK-Shadows of the Afterworld-LP
- ASS-END OFFEND-Unchecked Aggression-EP
- TALK IS POISON-live

KENNY KAOS

- RADIO REELERS-The Next Best Thing-LP
- HATEPINKS-Play the Songs...-EP
- FLASCHEN-You're Negative Baby-EP
- HI-FI KILLERS/LOS DROGOS-split EP
- THE CLIFTONS-Rock Out with My Cock Out-EP
- RADIO DEAD ONES-Holy Ghost-EP
- REGULATIONS-Electric Guitar-LP
- THE WIPERS-Over the Edge-LP
- LES MACCHABEES-LP
- RADIO REELERS/SPITS/BRIEFS-live

CAROLYN KEDDY

- KNAUGHTY KNIGHTS-EP
- TOKYO ELECTRON-LP
- KING LOUIE ONE MAN BAND-LP
- REIGNING SOUND-I'll Cry/Your Love-45
- RODRIGUEZ-Black Finger Tips-10"
- CARBONAS-Waiting to Happen-EP
- REGULATIONS-LP / BLACK LIPS-LP
- I ATTACK-EP / AS MERCENÁRIAS-LP
- This Day and Age-film
- REATARDS/TOKYO ELECTRON/ANGRY ANGLES - live

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl or CD-only releases to the address on the previous page. See Demos section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

WILL KINSER

- HELLSHOCK-LP / LEBENDEN TOTEN-12"
- THE WIPERS-Over the Edge-LP
- THE WIPERS-Rebels With a Cause-LP
- STORMCROW-Enslaved in Darkness-LP
- ANTIBIOTICOS-Idea Envenenada-EP
- MOSKITO SPEZIAL-Hallooo...?!-EP
- REGULATIONS-LP / AS MERCENÁRIAS-LP
- RÖVSVETT-Roll-Mats Bjuder...1984-1987-LP
- BEYOND PINK – "Jedan Dva, Jebla Te Ja" LP
- CAREER SUICIDE-live

RAY LUJAN

- PROPAGANDHI-CD / REGULATIONS-LP
- SADO-NATION-CD / BENT OUTTA SHAPE-LP
- COUGARS-Pillow Talk-CD
- THE LIVING BLUE-Fire CD
- PHOENIX FOUNDATION-Falling...-EP
- ADULESCENTS UK-CD
- SICK56/HIGGINS++-split EP
- VENTS/TEEN SENSATIONS-split CDDAN
- DAN PADILLA / CHINESE TELEPHONES-EP
- ANNALISE-CD / BELLRAYS-Barfly-DVD

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- REGULATIONS-LP / AS MERCENÁRIAS-LP
- HIT ME BACK-Life-LP
- HOMO^2-Gaynessville, FL-CD
- REIGNING SOUND-I'll Cry/Your Love-45
- PHOENIX FOUNDATION-Falling...-EP
- DAN PADILLA / CHINESE TELEPHONES-EP
- CARBONAS-Waiting to Happen-EP
- RUINER-What Could Possibly Go Right?-CD
- V/A-Ceól Gáidhlig Mar Sgian Nad Amhaich!-EP
- CAREER SUICIDE-live

GOLNAR NIKPOUR

- LEBENDEN TOTEN-State Laughter-12"
- CARBONAS-Waiting to Happen-EP
- AS MERCENÁRIAS-LP
- DESCONTROLADOS-Aburrimiento EP
- BLACK LIPS-Let It BloomLP
- HELLSHOCK-Shadows of the Afterworld-LP
- BENT OUTTA SHAPE-Stray Dog Town-LP
- REATARDS-Teenage Hate LP
- POST EXTREME STRESS DISORDER-CD
- TALK IS POISON / OBSERVERS / GOUKA-live

DONNA POOLE

- REATARDS-Teenage Hate-LP
- REGULATIONS-Electric Guitar-LP
- BLACK LIPS-Let It Bloom-LP
- RADIO REELERS-The Next Best Thing-LP
- RODRIGUEZ-Black Finger Tips-10"
- CARBONAS-Waiting to Happen-EP
- ASS-END OFFEND-Unchecked Aggression-EP
- I ATTACK-American Dream-EP
- LES MACCHABEES-LP
- RADIO DEAD ONES-Holy Ghost-EP

BRUCE ROEHRS

- THE ASMUNDS-Who Killed the Man in You-EP
- I ATTACK-American Dream-EP
- FEKALE BREKNINGER-Toilet Rocker-EP
- RADIO REELERS-The Next Best Thing-LP
- STORMCROW-Enslaved in Darkness-LP
- SICK56/HIGGINS++-split EP
- CARBONAS-Waiting to Happen-EP
- HELLSHOCK-Shadows of the Afterworld-LP
- RÖVSVETT-Roll-Mats Bjuder...1984-1987-LP
- NO SOLUTION-live / SKELS-live

RYAN WELLS

- HATEPINKS-Play the Songs...-EP
- CARBONAS-Waiting to Happen-EP
- V/A-No New York-LP
- KNAUGHTY KNIGHTS-EP
- REIGNING SOUND-I'll Cry/Your Love-45
- I ATTACK-American Dream-EP
- TOKYO ELECTRON-LP
- PHOSPHOR-Granola-12"
- BLACK LIPS-Let It Bloom-LP
- REGULATIONS-Electric Guitar-LP

ZINE TOP TEN

- Blackpool Rox II # 8
- Blah Blah Blood #2
- DOLL #220
- Hluboka Orba #25
- Last Breath #1
- Last Hours #11
- Razorcake #28
- Rocktober 41
- Slug & Lettuce #85
- Some Hope & Some Despair #8

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#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#170/July '97. Tedio Boys, Mine, The Four Cockroaches, Meanwhile, Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hood Rat, Bristle, The Slits. Scene reports: West Canada, France, Indonesia.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Umlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#237/Feb '03. Top Ten Records of 2002, "Music as a Weapon: Artists in Wartime," Dirt Bike Annie, Let It Burn, Stockyard Stoics, King Khan & Shrines, 625 Records, Feast Or Famine, Rudimentary Peni, Coachwhips, Self Defense.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola and San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, "Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scene report

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech scene report, New Zealand scene report.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oi!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged/Criminal IQ/Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene Reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

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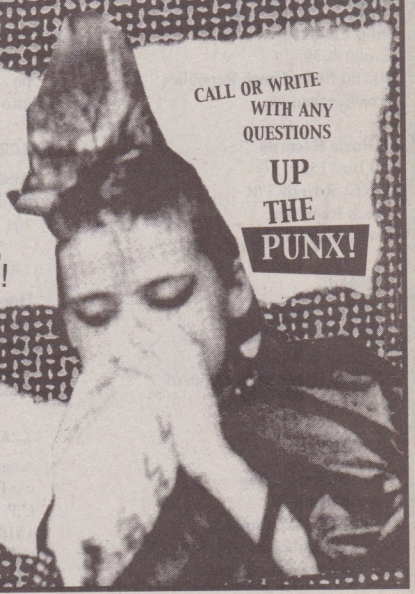

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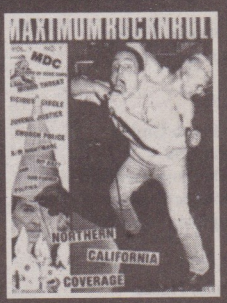

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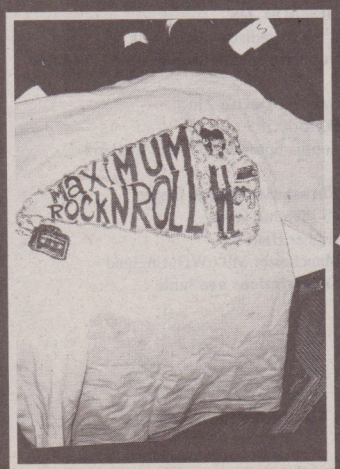

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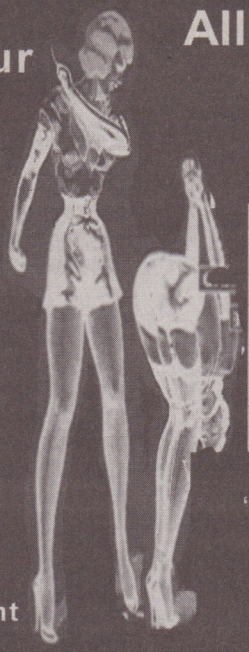

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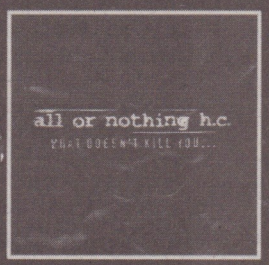

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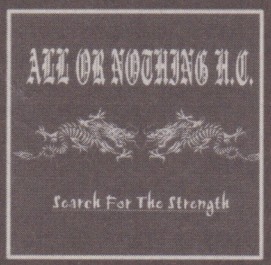

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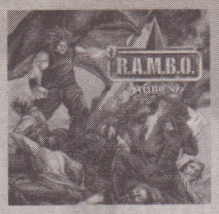

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Dearest Maximumrocknrollers—
It's another Saturday night at 924 Gilman Street and although it's a killer show, I'm a bit restless here in the Stoar. One game I've devised to entertain myself is "spot the undercover pig." I've sighted none so far, but I have hopes that one will waltz into the store wanting to buy earplugs, then I can spit on his tacky Hawaiian shirt.

Oh wait, didn't you know? There are undercover cops at Gilman occasionally now. They pay to get in, and then walk around (looking like some sore ass thumbs) trying to find kids to bust. The only tickets issued so far have been for drinking down the street from the club. Their presence has caused a pretty nasty underlying tension. Who wants a fucking cop in their fucking punk club? Not I. However, the cops are just a symptom of a larger ill, I'm afraid—a shift that may in fact endanger the club. Berkeley is looking into re-zoning the West Berkeley industrial area (in which Gilman resides) to include retail. This move is unmistakably in hopes to raise revenue for the city through the sales tax generated by new retail establishments. Property value in the area would increase exponentially, and if we could even still afford the rent Gilman would be considered even more of an undesirable element in the community than it is now. Nice new businesses will not want a neighbor whose patrons are prone to vandalism and civil disobedience. These are scary thoughts, my friends. As it is not yet upon us, the only thing to do is spit on a narc and write to city government telling them how valuable our industrial areas are.

It's a good thing tonight is a killer show, I needed some cheering up. There is a kid hanging from the rafters throwing cans at Career Suicide right now. Man, people are fucking shit up tonight—couch cushions, bottles, cans, flyers, keys, and anything else these young ruffians can get their hands on is being thrown about. Career Suicide is playing a pretty inspiring set, but I must say that my favorite band of the night was Strung Up. Paul remarked that the singer sounds like Olho Seco, and I totally concur. They sounded fucking awesome! Unfortunately, I can't really pay enough attention to the bands because of how busy the store is tonight. People love generic soda and candy. I wish we had healthier snacks to sell, but kids don't wanna eat healthy anyway, right?

Speaking of doing things you don't want to do, there was a Gilman meeting today. We discussed and voted on several issues of consequence. The one that is sure to be wildly unpopular is from now on there are no outside drinks allowed into Gilman. The presence of undercover cops has put intense pressure on us to eliminate drinking in the club. Of course, it's never been allowed, but we all know that there are more than a few people who have their crafty ways of sneaking booze. If an undercover cop were to catch someone in the club drinking it would mean a shitstorm of lameness for the club. Hence, no outside drinks. Will it stop drinking in the club? Probably not. Is imposing more rules and restrictions the answer? Probably not. The general sentiment is that something must be done though, and hopefully it'll be something that avoids invasions of personal privacy such as bag searches, pat downs, etc.—it's a difficult line to walk. (Any ideas? We could really use some help.)

Another agenda item of today's meeting that may interest *Maximum* readers is that got approval to bring selling zines back to the store!!! So far I've got *Maximum Rocknroll*, *Memory Loss, Scam, Zine Libs,* and pretty soon I'll be carrying *Razorcake* too. But that is not nearly enough! So get in touch if you'd like to sell *your* zines in the Gilman Stoar. It's on consignment with no commission (all cash is yours!). Email me, write me, or come down to Gilman any Saturday—I'll be here. Fuck, you should come to Gilman anyway! Every Friday and Saturday (Sundays occasionally too) there is a show, and even if it isn't a righteous one, which it usually is, you can come at 7pm and volunteer. Or you can play boggle in the store with me. The punx are here, where you at?

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Contact: Arielawesome@gmail.com
PO Box 301, Berkeley, CA 94701

P.S. The Stoar could also really use free coffee, so if you slave away at a fine coffee establishment in the Bay Area, hook us up! We need about a pound every other week.

P.P.S. Gilman maintains an environment of *no racism, no sexism*, and *no homophobia*. If you think that's hippie shit then you're a jock and a lurker and I'll spit on you and the undercover cop while you guys hold hands.

MRR—
Thank you MRR for printing this letter… First, my love and heart goes out to my daughter "Brina," my gal Strawberry Shortcake, my family and every one of my homeboys from LMP (La Mirada Punx).

My name is Allen, a.k.a. Ogie. I'm in Folsom Prison, California. I'm working on my own zine, it's called *316Zero*. I don't own a fucking typewriter, don't want one. I write the whole zine by hand. Issue #1 is almost complete—fuck yeah! My hand feels like a bag of smashed assholes and I feel super-duper-nar-nar about it. I feel my zine is pretty DIY. I've gone as far as I can. I need help. A dependable publisher and distro. I need some 10x12 envelopes and books of stamps. All donations will not be forgotten. So if there is anyone who can make tons of copies of *316Zero* and distribute it, I could sure use a helping hand.

So the first response I deem dependable enough to help my white ass will be my publisher… *316Zero* has not been priced yet, but rest assured. A bar code is not included! To quote GG Allin (in my own words), "My mind is a machine gun, my zine is the bullets, the world is my target." Please contact me at:

Allen Barnes J-50888
Folsom Prison
PO 715071
Represa, CA 95671

Brinadian, and Jessica Anne, I love you both!
—Ogie

Hey y'all—
I just wanted to write and tell everyone that the book [the New Orleans Zine Project] is all together. I'm not taking anymore writing and it looks totally awesome. Thanks to everyone who contributed or helped. It's called *Stories Care Forgot* and Last Gasp will put it out in January sometime and I'm gonna tour with it in February. I'm not sure to where yet, but anyone who wanted to do readings anywhere would be totally welcome. And I'll send copies to everyone who contributed. If anyone who didn't end me an intro about their post-Katrina experiences still wants to there's probably room. if anyone didn't send me a paragraph long bio about yourself then I just made one up. If that's not ok then send me one!

The proceeds from the book will go towards Plan "B" and Community Labor United (though maybe just to CLU, even though Plan B will be plugged, too).
Thanks everybody!
Boo-yah.
—Ethan Clark
PO Box 2413
Ashevillie, NC, 28802

MRR—
Hey guys, I am still amazed to find myself listening to punk rock. I have been listening to it for over 20 years, and I am surprised to see it has become the culture of choice for high school kids. It may not be the same as it was 20 years ago, but at least it is getting some recognition after all these years.

I still like all the old hardcore stuff, MDC, etc. A lot of the new bands with the old sounds are sounding great. But something has changed. It seems all the individuality is gone. Everyone involved seems to be acting the same, dressing the same, running with the same people, and having the same thoughts. It is very delusionary and exclusionary. You have to know the right people or you may be in trouble.

So I would like to address all the punks and skins out there with the following:

Here is a good start to the day. Have you ever thought? I mean really, truly, deeply, thought? It seems many punx and skins don't involve themselves in any real thinking at all. No brain activity means no chance for change. It seems a lot of you mindlessly accept the United States and the values that are injected into your minds through television and corporate bullshit they sell to you.

It seems your generation is just waiting for a change that is not going to come unless someone stands up and gives rise to the new wave of thought that symbolizes the influence of today's standards and way of thinking. It seems you all have leaders that you leach onto and follow to the grave or prison. Are you so looking for something to believe in, that you will cling to the first savior that comes along? Living for others is a very damaging way to live out your days. Or is it that you will jump in head first into any idea or concept they throw at you and follow any identity they provide you? I only ask these questions because it seems there is some deliberate act on the part of people of the system to tie you down with rituals and habitual laws. When I was a punk no one told me how to live, and if they did I would run a million miles away. It also seems there is a lot of alienation out there. If you want to have a scene that is unique, shouldn't that scene be inclusionary? Or are you going to use the power being "in" gives you to cast out and spit upon those that disagree with your views. Everyone should have the right to be themselves—it may not be "cool" but who the fuck cares? Having friends that accept you and put up with your bullshit is a good thing, but when we start isolating people and trampling on their rights, where are we? Too often our so-called friends have [ulterior] motives as to the reasons they pull us into them. We have to think what their reasons are to be so accepting of us—it usually involves bullshit and hierarchy. You must also question why a scene controls all facets of your ideas. Scenes take many forms, but they all try to exclude certain groups of people that are somehow less worthy than the consciousness of the group. These tactics make me wonder, if they are so cutting edge in their thought process why are they carrying all the same prejudice and prejudgments that have been carried for so long?

I know this is going to hurt, but you really have to think and question things every day if you are going to find the truth. Don't be a sheep following the heard. You are important and your scene means something, so be involved in it, and put your two cents in. I did.
—Thomas

MRR—
I have been a part of the punk scene for a little over four years now and a reader of *MRR* for over three. I feel the need to give back to the scene that has given so much to me. I am starting a record label and my first release is going to be a compilation. I am looking for bands that play any genre of punk. Hardcore, garage, experimental, and whatever else you feel fits into this category (please no racist, sexist, or homophobic material). Please send song(s) with contact information. Any questions or tips on starting/running a label please email me or write. Thanks.
—Jordan Swartz
3723 Little Mac Drive
Lancaster, PA 17538
thefacelesskid@netscape.net

MRR—
I'm writing to ask for sanity. I've hated the governing Republicrats in this nation since I was old enough to read a newspaper. I've been harassing cops and authority figures my whole life. I've never been content with the way things are. Now, I am actually afraid.

I'm going to be in prison for another four years. I've been in since before we invaded Iraq. Now that everyone has long forgotten the supposed reasons we invaded to begin with, I can see the nation and the whole world divided more and more. We have people living in poverty all over the world watching our greed and religious fanaticism. We have people in this country who can't eat or afford rent while we spend $600 billion building more guns. I know I've been part of the problem. When I should have been out there practicing civil disobedience and learning what I could do, I was hiding in an alley doing smack. Well, we can't turn away forever. We have to do something! Our country, our homes, our lives are being stolen by the capitalist puppet masters. It's time to turn the music up and do something. Whatever you believe, take a stand for it. Write something, talk to someone, organize! I want to have something left out there when my time is up!

Thanks!

Stay pissed,
—Taylor Hunt #61758
1640 11th Ave. N.
Nampa, ID 83687

Dear MRR—
Cheers for reviewing my fanzine *Negative Reaction* in the December issue. One thing that has always puzzled me though, is why you—in every review—say that it is "copied," not printed. If only that were the case! Because it's a big A4 zine, we spend £350 (and that's going up soon) on each issue, printing 600

copies, when, if it were really "copied," we could do 30 of each issue and make no effort in selling them (and maybe give the readers severe eyestrain in the process). And it would be an insult to the labels who send us freebies; mind you, despite being the biggest print run for a regular "real punk" zine in the UK, I am yet to get any freebies from labels like Captain Oi; guess I'm just too much of a pis-staking twat!

I have no problems with the actual criticism of the zine itself; one of the best things about *MRR* is that it ain't afraid to speak its mind.

The Oi!-Union Jack enamel pins were a disaster! I've always thought of Oi as a working class movement for ordinary kids who'd otherwise be blacklisted in the music press, etc. A movement against the bosses and politicians, whilst having a beer and laugh too. Obviously the various arseholes that have hijacked the movement over the years have appeared to twist its meaning. Most recently it's been the laughable pro-war/Bush American Oi bands. How the fuck they dare to say they have skinhead pride and support an upper-class fascist fuckwit just baffles me. Thankfully in the UK most skinheads I know are ordinary decent people with a healthy mistrust for authority, and I haven't met *one* who supports the war. I don't even know why I'm writing all this—fair cop, it was just a shameless piece of opportunism, a way to get good trades for CDs, and judging by the amount of pins I still have left, not a very good one!

As for the dodgy tongue-in-cheek humour you refer to, who am I to argue? Ever since the days of CB radio in the early 80s, I have taken great delight in winding up people who take themselves too seriously. I admire anyone who takes a stand against the New World Order, but there are some who are so po-faced and elitist that I can't help but wonder if they're from the same privileged backgrounds as those who run the show (hence their obsession with boring books on political theory and history, written in a language only a university lecturer could understand). I could easily get a glowing review in *MRR* and many other fanzines by cutting out the provocative bits and sick humour, but where's the fun in that? Long-winded rhetoric and crap music just puts people off. We need *personality* to draw people in and make them think. We need good tunes to make them listen, and singers who can actually sing, not sound like a dog in pain. Otherwise, get used to your local punk rock clique cos it's never gonna get any bigger.

—Trev (*Negative Reaction* zine)

20 New Front St
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Co. Durham, DH9 9LY
England

P.S. *Negative Reaction* #3, featuring Peter and the Test Tube Babies, Runnin' Riot, Dirty Love, New York Rel-X, and Tony Martin (anti-corruption campaigner) is available for $6 PayPal from trevhagl@hotmail.com. I also have a big trade list, if any record labels are reading this (full of Step 1 stuff, etc.).

Hello MRR!

In *MRR* #268 issue (September 2005) there was a comment about our fanzine *Zarata*. I wanna make some corrections:

The fanzine is both written in basque and spanish, not entirely in Basque.

The Christianity stuff is something we found on the net. We thought it was nice, incredible or laughing, so we decided to insert it in the fanzine. We don´t believe in any religion and, as you say, we are antifascists.

I would prefer if you would put my email as contact, not my personal address. Therefore, there is a mistake in the postcode of my address, but don´t worry.

That's all. Thanks for your support. We will send you the second issue of *Zarata* as far as we get it.

Take care,
—Igor

MRR—

Hey! I sent the awesome *MRR* a copy of *Tacoma Lab Experiments* in the mail, and got a copy of *MRR* with the review in it, and the review said that it was *TLE* #4 and the price is $3. It is actually #1, and the price is 2 stamps. I don't know if there is any way to fix that in the next issue or wherever, but if there is some procedure you guys usually use for mess-ups, cool…

Anyways, thanks,
—Doingo

Hello MRR & readers—

Thanks for the review of my zine in issue 270 (November 2005). There was a little mistake: the zine is called *Ratcharge*, not *Ratcharger* nor *Ratchager*. Also, I provided a snail mail address but I'm a bit dumb and I should have said please don't use this address! I'm not gonna live at this house anymore very soon, I won't have a steady address for the next few months so if you want to get a copy of the zine please get in touch by email first: ratcharge@yahoo.fr

I also want to take the opportunity to say that I love *MRR* more than I love my mother, and I'm really excited about the new coordinator team Golnar and Paul.

Also, thanks for letting us know what happened with Mike Thorn. That shit's fucked up; I was really disappointed.

OK, thanks for publishing this and for doing one of the best zines in the world.

Hugs + kisses
—Alex

MRR—

Just writing to let you know your efforts at supporting the underground scene in its myriad of forms is very appreciated. An example of this is your zine reviews; the only Canadian mag that prominently features zines seems to have a backlog that never seems to plague *MRR*, (i.e., we editors/writers never have to wait four months to find out the zine we submitted for review a year ago still hasn't been reviewed). Good job!

I would also like to thank you for the great review [of *Ohnotherobot*] in #268…however my address was misprinted and I fear my neighbors are getting all my mail. The current address should read:

Chris / OHNOTHEROBOT fanzine
829 Main Street
Saskatoon, SK
S7H OK2
Canada

—Paix et l'amour

Dear Trev, Igor, Doingo, Alex, Chris, and all zine editors out there—

MRR *apologizes for any inacuracies in our zine reviews section. We always do our best to get everything right, but I guess punks are fallable too… Who knew? OK, so I guess the "Let's Get Fucking Wasted and Do Zine Reviews" party wasn't such a good idea either.*

Seriously, though… To ensure that we get all the correct info for your zine, it's always best to write out all of the pertinent facts—postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed, number of pages, language, mailing address, url, email address—on a separate piece of paper and include it with your zine when you send it in. And we'll try to stay sober.

Keep up the good work—we love you all!
—Paul

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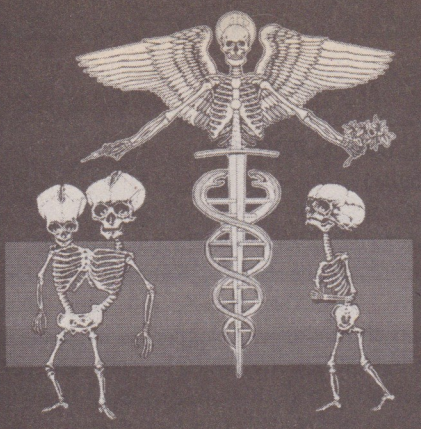

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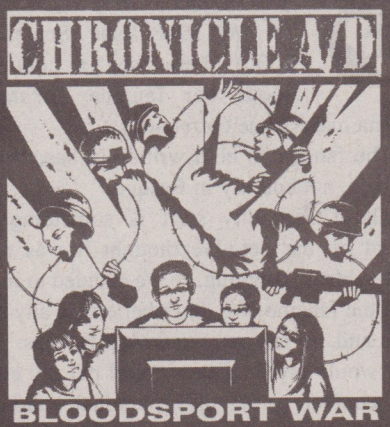

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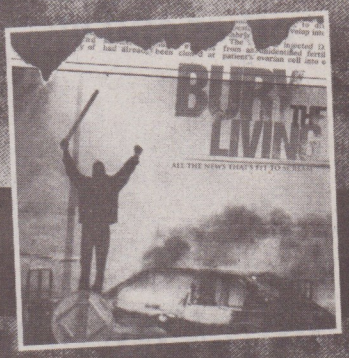

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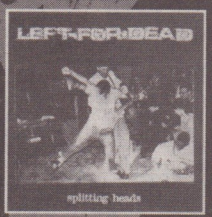

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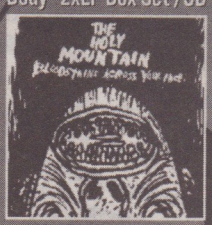

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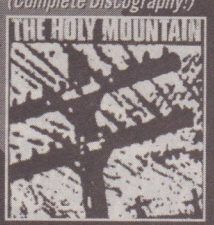

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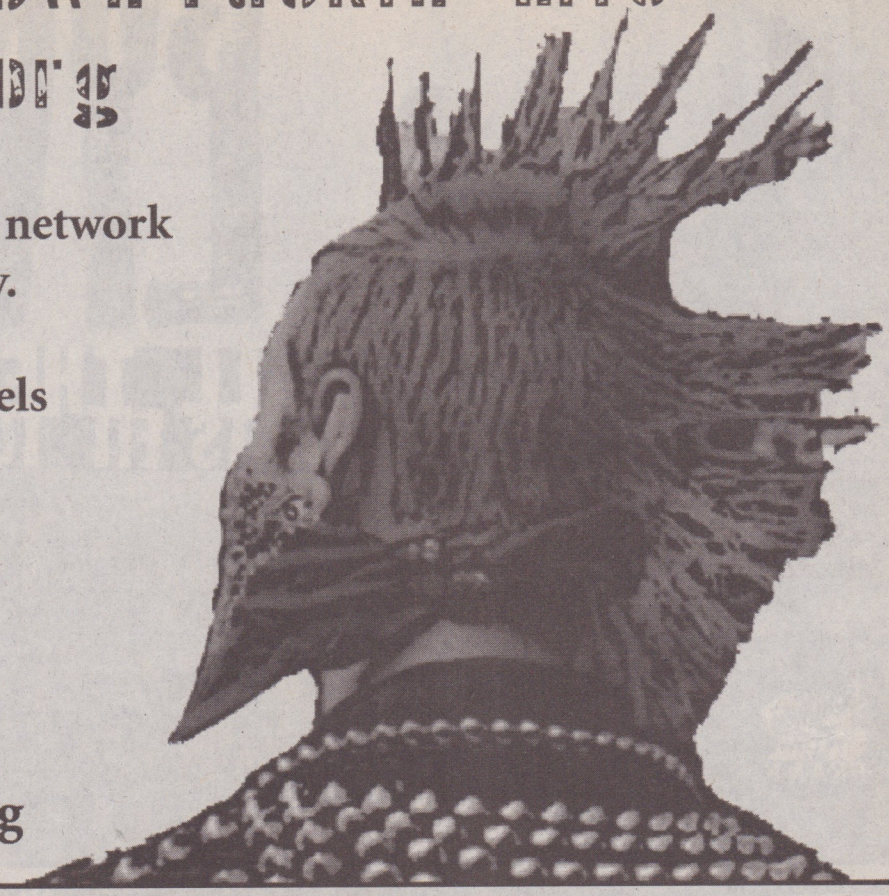

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COLUMNS

For as long as I can remember now I've been complaining, bitching and moaning about the heat. I got to my wits' end over it. It was so hot and so dry for so long, I was doing rain dances as I watched the parched earth get scorched and the garden shrivel up, no matter how much I watered it. But then overnight that sweatshirt I was longingly starting at a few months is back on and I've got a chill. The overcast day has a drizzle that has left everything feeling damp. I have a chill in my bones that reminds me that even with dreamed-about high temperatures in the 60s, I'm going to stay chilly for days to come.

The days are getting shorter, too. When it gets dark at 7 pm I end up in a funk. I can feel myself crash, like when the coffee wears off, only in this case I crash so hard that I cannot get my momentum to continue on whatever I was working on before it got dark. And on a cold, wet overcast day it's dark by 6pm. Now with the clocks just changed back an hour, it's even worse. I know the cycles and rhythms of the year, and I know what to expect, but that doesn't stop the blues from coming.

For the last few weeks of September I've been feeling the most intense lack of motivation. It's been kind of confusing to me, actually. There was no overt change in the weather—it was still plenty warm, dry and sunny. In fact, it was those perfect days I dream of—when it's actually comfortable. Not hot, not cold, but rather an exhilarating change can be felt. A cooler air one day, and then a warmer one the next. One day you feel the hint of autumn, and then you almost curse the lingering summer heat the South holds onto. But as the humidity calms down and the dog days of August's oppressive heat are in the past, these are normally the days when I get an extra spring in my step. I get super motivated and inspired and I want to be active and doing things that I had been putting off not too long before. So it was confusing to me that I found myself more tired than normal, barely able to get out of bed. Once I did, it took me two hours of coffee drinking and slow stretching to feel like I was a human possibly capable of interacting in the world. In my mind, I still felt exhausted from the heat and punk chaos of the summer, but in reality that was weeks or months behind me, and it made no sense to still feel like I was recovering. But it did feel like I was recovering, and I didn't go out much, or do much of anything outside of my immediate routine. No shows, no events, no socializing. I didn't want it, in fact I craved the solitude. The exhaustion was strange, as was the almost depressed feeling I had from the solitude and relatively free schedule I had. I looked forward to a weekend where nothing was going on and I had nowhere to be. But as with all routine patterns, much as I crave inactivity, it also brings me down. Even if I need it, even if need sitting all day reading a book, or sleeping half the day away after a 60-plus-hour work week, it doesn't feel right. I don't take the necessary pleasure in the break or respite. Instead, I start to feel the blues.

As I lamented to a few people who I talked to in that time who would ask, I would say, "Well, I'm fine, everything is great, but I am intensely unmotivated, and all I want to do is sleep or read." They would tell me that it sounded like I was preparing to hibernate. True enough, I do it every year. But September is always a confusing month because how can I be preparing to hibernate (or rather, acting like I'm already hibernating) when it's amazing outside and I'm supposed to me inspired and active? But we don't always have control over how our brains react. I can also, in hindsight, tell that following all of the extreme weather and dismal destruction in the Gulf from the hurricanes really took a mental toll on me. My cathartic emotions were drained. Much like when I got wrapped up in the post 9-11 coverage, or the initial 24-hour cable news coverage of the Iraq war, or the post-election depression I felt into, when it's happening I can't help but pay attention. I have an emotional investment that I don't even realize, due to empathy, sympathy, anger or frustration. I think in the case of the storms, it was even more so, cause I'm a weather geek. I always obsessively follow the weather—I get excited and monitor storms on a regular basis. The fact that this huge hurricane was headed for New Orleans kept me on a tight watch, and I felt more connected to this knowing a lot people there and relating to the impact of uncontrollable mother nature. It's not like a war your government wages that you disagree with and get angry about. You cannot get mad at a storm. You can't go to war over a storm. You can prepare for it, but ultimately we have no control over it. Those first few days were intense as there was virtually no news coming out of New Orleans. No one knew anything and I could tell by the way that the media was not talking about it, that it was going to be bad. Erik and I both had a gut instinct that it was going to be worse than anyone could imagine. Well, in hindsight it makes a lot of sense to me why I have felt this strange emotional void for the past month, and why I've been more exhausted than normal and drained. But it's funny how I can ignore the circumstances that I'm in the midst of. It reminds me of earlier this year when I had these insanely tight muscles in my neck, the kind that make it almost impossible to even move your head. I actually got kind of freaked out about it because it was a different sort of pain than I'd ever experienced before: right at the base of my skull it felt like I had a dagger shoved into my head. I called my friend Carol, who has studied massage therapy and is familiar with my abnormal knots of stress, and described it to her and asked her what she thought. What I described was a really intense knot where all the muscles in my back and neck connect. I got to explaining to her how for the past several weeks I had been on this non-ending cycle of working twelve-hour days, then driving out of town for punk shows, sleeping in the back of my Jeep, driving back home and straight back to another twelve-hour shift. Of course, as

I explained it, and I know she's on the other side of the phone with mouth agape and a knowing motherly look on her face, I am realizing that I am explaining exactly why I have this monstrous knot of tight muscles in my head: I've living an insanely fast life and I'm not taking care of myself. At least I'm not taking a break to even recognize that I'm not eating, or sleeping, or resting properly. But I love those moments of inertia. I live for them. I hate the crash, and I don't want to pay the price for the chaos. I do not like to rest; I never have. I still fight bedtime like a small whiny child. I hate going to sleep. Problem is, once I am asleep I never want to get up. It is yet another one of those strange vicious cycles that I have come to accept is me.

So those tight stress muscles in my head are back, and this time I cannot blame it on all night drives to Pennsylvania to rock out to bands. It feels like I've been doing nothing of late, though of course there is no such thing as doing nothing in my life. I am always on the go, but sadly I think this time around the knotted muscles are more from my job and working too hard there, than from anything fun, crazy or zany. And those night-long *Law and Order* marathons that I get sucked into watching on TV probably really are necessary mind-numbing vacations from myself that I not only deserve, but also need. But it feels like I am wasting time when I give in and let my guard down, and there is nothing I hate more than wasting time. So how do I get motivated, when I'm exhausted and want only to sleep? How do I do reviews when it's the last thing on earth I want to think about? I push myself through, and then a day like today comes when it's cold and dreary, wet and dismal, and Erik is away on tour, and I am forced to get myself out of bed and cook my own dinner, and I can finally see the patterns and understand the cycles of the seasons still have me in their grip. And that the insanity of the world, the corruption of the government, the fury of mother nature, and the out of control feeling that we're all on a crash course rollercoaster ride that is going off track is so intense that I now have to do what I have always done and recognize it and let it inspire me to push through it, rather than let it fester inside me and eat me alive. It's time to get out of my house and get moving again. But I can't trade in my overly emotional sensitivity for anything, because it is me. I can't shirk off the effects of the seasons, even with meds, because the nature rhythm of the earth needs to be felt. Ultimately, I have to ride it out and get through it because, just as there will be another devastating storm, the sun will come back out and the rebuilding will commence. Like so many of us, I fight my own daily battles with myself. I push myself and fight with myself when I don't measure up to my own expectations. But I also have come to accept this horrible thing that is happening to me called age. I can't quite carry on the way I once could. A three-day drunken punk fest bender with disturbed nights of sleep on a floor take a toll on me and it does take much longer to recover than it did ten years ago. One night of drinking and I feel it the next day. A 50-hour work week and I want to have a day off to do not much of anything sometimes, even though on those days when I give in to the rest I feel horrible doing so, I know if I don't I will crash even harder. I forget to take care of myself sometimes while I worry about everyone else. My neck is fucking killing me. My joints and muscles hurt on a regular basis, but it is not going to stop me from rockin' out. I think that now I have accepted that the seasons are changing, and I pick up that sweatshirt I not so long ago was longing for, and I get the long pants out of the closet, and thrown an extra blanket on the bed, and rediscover drinking hot herbal teas, I can then let myself read another good book about Eastern Europe and simply enjoy that, despite all my bitching and complaining, I've got it pretty good.

I finally found the motivation to get the latest issue of *Slug & Lettuce* done and off to print. If you want to get a copy of issue #85 in the US, send 60¢ in postage. In Canada or Mexico it's $1, and worldwide it's $2. I also have these really cool embroidered patches with Fly's punk cow design. They are available in red, silver, green, purple or blue stitching on a black circular design. They are a fund-raising benefit for *S&L* and are available for $3 ppd (in the US) or $5 ppd worldwide. Thanks! Chris(tine) • PO Box 26632 • Richmond, VA 23261-6632

Soldiers brandishing automatic weapons, a defining characteristic of life in Third World dictatorships, have become commonplace at airports, bus and train stations, government offices and highway checkpoints since 9/11. Now troops are becoming our first responders to situations, such as natural disasters and flu outbreaks, which normally fall under civilian jurisdiction.

Everything's gone topsy-turvy: The National Guard, charged with keeping order here at home and legally under the control of state governors, has been shipped off to Iraq and Afghanistan, shanghaied by the federal government. Here in the US whatever comes up, the Bush Administration's first reaction is to send in the regular army troops who are supposed to be in Iraq. Whether it's a sinister plot against American democracy or the most sustained large-scale foolishness in history, the Bush Administration is tearing down the traditional wall between overseas military action and domestic law enforcement.

Creeping militarism leapt into full view with Bush's October 4 request to Congress to repeal the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, which prohibits the use of the military in domestic policing except for the purpose of quelling a revolution. Citing the theoretical possibility that Asian avian flu, now only transmittable from bird to human, could mutate into a human-to-human form, Bush said: "If we had an outbreak somewhere in the United States, do we not then quarantine that part of the country? And who best to be able to effect a quarantine? One option is the use of a military that's able to plan and move. I think it's an important debate for Congress to have."

Overturning Posse Comitatus would allow troops to break into houses and apartments and sweep the streets for flu victims, and forcibly contain them in Guantánamo-style camps. They could seal off cities or whole states. These extreme measures could also be deployed against US citizens after hurricanes, tornados, earthquakes, or even election disputes—whenever and wherever a president decides they are necessary.

Bush laid the groundwork for his assault on Posse Comitatus on September 26, when he explained his decision to unleash the 82nd Airborne on Hurricane Katrina-devastated New Orleans: "I want there to be a robust discussion about the best way for the federal government, in certain extreme circumstances, to be able to rally assets for the good of the people." The Louisiana National Guard, meanwhile, was stuck in Iraq.

"The translation of this is martial law in the United States," said Dr. Irwin Redlener, associate dean of Columbia University's School of Public Health and director of its National Center for Disaster Preparedness.

Redlener called Bush's proposal to deploy troops on American soil an "extraordinarily Draconian measure." Even Gene Healy, senior editor at the right-wing Cato Institute, said Bush's proposal would undermine "a fundamental principle of American law" that "reflects America's traditional distrust of using standing armies to enforce order at home, a distrust that's well-justified."

All this over avian flu, which to date has killed fewer than 100 people worldwide.

Travel to other countries and you'll find that a society's freedom is inversely related to the number of guys wearing camouflage, brandishing big guns and pulling people over at roadblocks. Blurring the distinction between policing and soldiering, as do the military police in the former Soviet republics of Central Asia and Middle Eastern countries like Syria and Jordan, is a defining characteristic of repressive states.

Civilian cops may be rude or even abusive, but they're not supposed to shoot you without a good reason. You're their boss, or at least they work for the mayor you elected. Not so with soldiers. Military troops are responsible only to their chain of command, which is likely to end thousands of miles away in Washington. They shoot sooner and quicker than cops, and they have much bigger guns. Regimes that use the military to maintain order tell their citizens: do what we tell you, or else. They rely upon violence rather than tacit consensus to stay in charge.

Rule under the point of a gun is not democracy.

James Pinkerton of the New America Foundation argues for efficiency over freedom. "When you absolutely, positively, have to get something done right away," he wrote in *USA Today*, "you call in the military. By their very nature, men and women in uniform are oriented toward getting things done. They are trained to complete their mission, or die trying. And as Hurricane Katrina made clear, the rest of the government doesn't hold to such a high standard. So why not the best?"

Federal agencies muffed Katrina because of inadequate budgets and mismanagement, not because they're intrinsically incompetent. Moreover, there's little evidence that militarizing domestic functions makes the trains run on time. The military controls everything from road construction to trash collection, yet Pakistan remains a nation that suffers from systemic corruption, a staggering drug problem and crippling disparity of wealth—not to mention an endless low-intensity civil war. Most European democracies, by contrast, enjoy a higher standard of living—and more efficient government—than the U.S. And they do it without pointing automatic rifles at flood victims lining up for food and water.

But what if military dictatorship *could* be proven a more efficient form of government than old-fashioned democracy? What if a standing army could do what a bunch of namby-pamby bureaucrats can't? Would it be worth it?

That's the choice George W. Bush is asking Congress, and thus us, to make. The fact that he hasn't been impeached for daring to ask it highlights the dictatorial tendencies of those who share his contempt for personal liberty.

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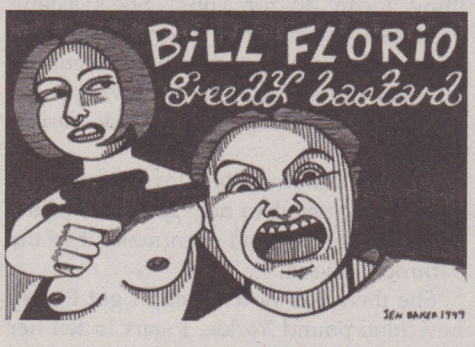
Current books: *Wake Up, You're Liberal! How We Can Take America Back from the Right* (Soft Skull Press, 336 pages, $14.95), is out now, available everywhere. *Generalissimo El Busho: Essays and Cartoons on the Bush Years* (NBM Publishing, 208 pages, $19.95 hardback/$15.95 paperback) is also out. The speaking tour is over, but if you're at a high school or college with a budget for bringing in speakers, I'd be happy to come to your city.



When I was a little kid, video games seemed to be everything. It's funny, because now when I think about it, around then it seemed like the best thing about each game was the box design. They always promised some fantastic experience that in reality was a couple of dots and lines on the TV screen, and even though it's hard to say the same thing about games they make today, I still really had to use my imagination when I played them. Things like character dialogue, sense of plot, or an ending other than your last turn was used up and you had to put a new virtual quarter in or start over—unless I felt like braving the drug dealers at the local arcade.

Even then, at best they were a time-killer and at worst I had welts on my fingers from playing 'til 5 am. But if you asked any kid what was lamer—video games or playing Dungeons and Dragons—the D&D kids always lost. It was just sort of the thing that, yeah, video games are nerdy, but D& D is about equal to telling the kids that beat your ass on a regular basis that you had gay sex with fat kids after school.

Now, when I was 11 or 12, I got a computer with a modem. It was a model of computer too embarrassing to mention (even then I felt a need to be different and just live with my lame choices, rather than have something in common with those I hated), so I got a CompuServe account (at the time you paid by the minute). There wasn't much to really do with something like this at the time—you could send an email if you knew someone else with an account, you could chat with other people that didn't mind paying, like, 15 bucks an hour to tie up their phone line, or you could play "games" with these people. The games were like versions of Battleship, except the graphics were made up of just rows of letters to represent water or spaceships or monsters, etc. After a month, my mom got the bill and the account was cancelled. I didn't use a modem again for at least twelve years — for that matter, I lost interest in video games too; my large hands never adapted well to those really uncomfortable controls designed by and for the Japanese.

I just want to take a break here to let everyone know I saw a photo of what Mormon underwear looks like, and it's so fucked up. Then I tried to buy some to wear on stage and the church has a whole monopoly on 100 percent of Mormon skivvies. Pure genius — no wonder they own half of Las Vegas.

A few years ago, several technological breakthroughs allowed the pinnacle of nerdiness to come to pass. The popularity of role-playing strategy action games was expanded into the on-line world for a monthly fee—thus the Dungeons and Dragons kids suddenly went from seedy Chinatown opium den to crushing Oxycontin over your fruit salad for breakfast. I'm sure you know a couple of people who have been lost to this sort of lifestyle. My wacky cousin informed me that in off hours from his low-wage job at the only Internet service provider for the Grand Canyon, he started playing Everquest (I think this was the first of the genre; there's about 20 such games now). Anyhow, he wasn't playing it like other games; he learned that he could actually turn a profit from it. It cost $10 a month to play, but he would sell interesting weapons on eBay

and sometimes get $25 to $150 a pop. People were so addicted to playing, they were willing to pay real money to virtually get ahead. I remember saying, "Wait, how does the person get this sword or whatnot if it doesn't really exist? Do you e-mail it? He's like, "No we set a time and place in the game and I meet his character and hand it to him."

Since then, my cousin started working for Blizzard, a company that makes the biggest hit of these games: World of Warcraft. He informed me that the most interesting part about this game (other than the usual sucking people into its grasp, getting their houses repossessed and their kids taken from them) is that it's actually starting to have an effect on third world economies.

There are about four million people playing. Two million are in China and South Korea. Big deal, right? Well, yeah. See, most of the third world players aren't addicted to the game at all—they're sweatshop workers playing so that chubby Danny Lefkowitz will use his mom's credit card to buy himself new armor instead of just playing by the rules. Sweatshops there usually are set up so that you live at the place you work (sometimes an airplane hangar), you work 12 to 14 hours a day, and if you lose your job, you're also homeless. People get paid about 50 cents an hour. Last year, these companies grossed about half a billion dollars! The players don't actually play the game. Basically, they sit there and watch a couple of PCs playing it with a sort of autopilot programmed in. They make sure that when a system operator says hello, they respond, and if some other player decides to pick a fight with their gold farmer, they don't get clobbered by not fighting back. Then they manually control the player out of the dungeon for the boss man to sell the bootay. Some of these gold farms are pulling in 60 grand a month, while the workers get about $150. Granted, $1,800 a year in China probably isn't all that bad—a Wal-Mart sweatshop worker makes only $1,149, and sitting there watching some little orc open treasure chests isn't all that bad compared to cutting your fingers off for Martha.

So what's the weirdest part of this? 1 in 200 Americans are addicted to being a full time dweeb, and the number's growing—no 12-sided dice necessary.

People in other countries are feeding their families because these nerds aren't even good video game players.

Everquest has the ability to set up an online account with Dominoes, and if you type "Pizza," you get one delivered without having to stop playing.

George Tabb is probably sending in a column right now about the same thing except he's giving shout-outs to orcs and mages he's met in the Warcraft Punk Clan. I got talked into going to that fest in Gainesville this month.

Over 'n' out. bill@candids.com

"He's so cute," says my Auntie Joan, as PJ, my Yorkshire terrier, spins in circles for her and licks her nose.

"I bet he does that for all the girls!" my aunt then says.

I say nothing. My dog is smart.

"Hello, puppy-doo," Auntie Joan says to PJ. He sneezes with excitement and barks at the size of her Jew-fro. It's what my hair would look like if I let it grow. Never.

"Anyway," says Aunite Joan, who I used to call "Anti-Joan" when I was a teenager cause it was so punk rock, "is there anything I can do for you?" She's asking because I just had my second major surgery of the year. This time besides cutting me open up and down and giving me a huge flesh zipper, they cut me side to side. Ouchie.

I tell her I'm fine, that I love her, and am glad she's offered to help take care of me since I really couldn't even make it to the bathroom myself.

She then asks how exactly I got PJ, my now nine pound Yorkie. I start to tell her and realize it's been eight years since my ex-wife got him for me. Time flies when you're in love with your dog.

*

"Hey, PJ," I say to my pal, who is seated next to me on the couch while I'm playing Duke Nukem on the PlayStation, "Ya wanna go out and get a beer or something?"

PJ just looks at me with that look. That look where he tilts his head, and stares at me like I'm crazy.

"You know, a beer," I explain, "a Budweiser, or Grolsch."

I like Grolsch. Started drinking it in eleventh grade. It has those tops that you can re-seal, so it stays good in your locker.

PJ says nothing. I guess I'm getting the silent treatment.

"Okay," I say, "we're going out." And we do.

Once outside we take a walk to the corner deli and I get a Miller. It was either that or Coors Silver Bullet. And that's pussy beer.

Outside again, PJ and I take a walk to the local park, and sit on a bench there. I sip my Miller, and PJ checks out the local action. Lots of women are walking around in their skirts and tennis shoes. It's just past five and the evening rush has begun.

"What do ya think of her?" I ask PJ, pointing to a girl wearing a nice tan pants suit with Nikes. She has long brownish hair, rosy cheeks, large green hoop earrings, and a nice butt. PJ says nothing, but looks at her. His head follows her as she walks past us. He just stares at her, then begins to pant.

"Put your tongue in your mouth," I say, "don't be so obvious." But PJ ignores me, and does the same thing when a blonde with a low cut sweater walks by. "The art to watching women," I explain to my pal as I sip my beer, "is to not be so damn conspicuous. Look like you are looking at something else. Maybe reading the paper or something. But if you just stare at them, they'll know!"

PJ again just looks at me like I'm nuts. So I ignore him and concentrate on my Miller. A few minutes later we spot a stunning brunette across the street. She's wearing a green overcoat, tight jeans, and eyes as blue as Windex. She's hot.

"Whoa," I say.

PJ says nothing. He just starts panting again. Heavy.

Suddenly the brunette spots us and smiles. Then she crosses the street and starts to walk toward us. I feel my heart start to beat fast, and my hand starts to sweat even though I'm grasping a cold beer. PJ starts with his tongue again.

"Hi guys," says the brunette as she finishes crossing the street, and enters the small park where we are seated.

"Um, hi," I say, sheepishly.

"You are so cute!" she says, and then a big smile crosses her face.

"Thank you," I say, beginning to blush.

"Not you," she says, then points to PJ, "him!"

I look at PJ. It's like the hundredth time this has happened. Chicks spot us, then they go for PJ Even though he pants with his tongue hanging out.

I take a good look at my pal, with his dark brown eyes, curly facial and body hair, and nubby tail. He's a Yorkshire terri-

er. So what? He's fucking three pounds. And he gets more chicks in one day then I could get in a lifetime. This isn't punk rock. But let me back up a bit.

*

About six months to a year earlier, I started whining a lot that I wanted a puppy. Really bad. Wendy, my ex-wife, got me a virtual pet, one of the Japanese things, and it died. But not before it turned into a chicken, a lizard, and Henry Rollins. A head with a thick neck.

"You can't take care of a virtual pet, how can you expect to take care of a real dog?" she asked me.

"It's different," I explained, "virtual pets are tougher than real animals. They're Japanese."

Wendy asked me what the fuck I was talking about and I admitted I didn't know. But that that excuse sounded good.

"Well," she said, "maybe one day you can have a real dog."

"When?" I asked her, "You always say that! I'm all grown up now, I think I deserve a dog!"

"We'll see," she said. And for months I bugged her for one. Then came my birthday. Well, a few days before it, anyway. Nick, my stepdad, was over, and we were playing Dark Forces on the PlayStation. The doorbell rang and I went to answer it. It was most likely Wendy, and most likely she didn't have her keys because key-loss runs in her family.

I opened the door and there stood Wendy, and our pal, Allyson, who is way punk rock. I held the door open, and they both walked in. I then went back to the couch and continued to show Nick how to shoot stormtroopers so they scream "arrgh!" and die. Wendy and Allyson walked over to us, and Wendy tried to hand me a shoe box. Well, a sneaker box. Converse.

"Take this box, George," she said, nonchalantly, "it's something I found for you." Then she handed me the box. Or tried to.

I told her I was busy killing Darth Vader's troops on an alien moon, and that I'd take it later.

"Take it now!" she exclaimed.

I looked at her and Allyson. Allyson had her hands on her hips, and looked pissed. So did Wendy.

"Put the box down, and I'll take it later," I said, as I shot a stormtrooper right between the fucking eyes. He yelled, called me "rebel scum," then died. Wendy then forced the box into my hands, making me drop the PlayStation controller.

"All right," I said, pissed. I held the box and looked at Wendy. It contained Converses. And as much as I think they are cool sneakers, I can't wear them because my feet are flat. She'd be better off giving them to my old pal Rev. Nørb.

Then the box moved. In my hands. Suddenly, I felt my heart begin to race. The last time something moved like that was when I went to move a trash bag outside my old apartment when I was really drunk after a Ramones show. The bag moved in my arms, then a huge rat jumped out, landed on my shoulder, squealed, and then hauled ass down the street. So I was kinda hesitant to open the box.

"Aren't ya gonna open it?" asked Allyson, with her cute Brooklyn accent.

I looked at her and Wendy in shock. All I could think of was that there was a live rat in this box, and when I opened it, it would bite off my nose. The biggest target in sight.

"Open it," said Nick.

I looked at all three of them. It was a conspiracy. They were all out to get me. I knew it. I just wasn't sure until now. They wanted me to get rabies so I could foam at the mouth like Cujo, then get locked up in Bellview, where I'd meet a large Indian who would eventually suffocate me, then free himself.

The box moved again.

My heart was now racing faster than Mario Andretti, or that little monkey racer, Diddy-Kong. I put the still unopened box down on the couch, and something popped it's head out. It had brown eyes, dark hair, and teeth. And it had a red ribbon around it's neck. They'd given me a rodent.

"Well?" said Allyson, looking at me with her hands still on her hips.

I didn't know what to say, so I looked at the thing in the box again. It wasn't a rat. It was a dog. And it was wagging it's nubby tail.

"A puppy?" I said, in shock.

"Yup," said Wendy, smiling.

"A puppy?" I repeated, still in shock.

"That's what it is," said Allyson, "and boy was he hard to take care of at my house! Devil Dog. Hound from Hell!"

"A puppy for me?" I said, again.

"Yes it is, George," said Nick.

"A puppy?" I repeated again. I was obviously in shock.

It jumped out of its box and started to run around the couch. I just stared at it. I couldn't believe it. A puppy. In our house. I wanted to play Dark Forces again. Some kind of reality. It continued to wag its nub, and run around the couch.

"Aren't ya gonna pick him up?" asked Wendy. I was kind of afraid to. What if he bit off my nose?

"George," said Nick, "pick up the puppy!"

I bent over and picked it up. It licked my hands and then my face. I looked closely at it, and suddenly began to feel tears well up behind my eyes. Wendy had gotten me a puppy! A real dog! I was a grown up now! Punk rock!

Over the next couple of days we played the name game with the puppy. Also, the sleeping in the crate and crying all night game. And the pooping and peeing in the apartment game. The dog won every time.

First his name was Sneaker, because he came in a Converse sneaker box. Hey, it was better than "Chuck Taylor." Then it was Lucky, from 101 Dalmatians...or the drummer of The Circle Jerks. But that didn't stick either; he just didn't seem like a Lucky.

Then it was Pepper, Coco, Brownie, Killer, Moose, Mugger, Johnny, Joey, Dee Dee, Marky, Tim, Jello, Ben, Nørb, Mykel, Stiv, Cheetah, Sid, Blag, Todd, Joe, Sean, and Mushy Tushie Poo-Poo Boy (that was Allyson's idea). But finally we decided on Scooter, because he couldn't walk right yet, and his little butt seemed to race faster than his front end.

We also decided on PJ, which stands for Pussy Junior—named after me, Pussy Senior. And it's good we came up with a name because it was time for his first vet visit. When I took him in, I felt like a proud Dad. And Wendy, a mom. The vet looked him over, and as he held my son, I held my breath. I was worried. Turns out he's okay, but has a little bronchitis. Then the vet gave us a bill. Wow. It really is like having a kid.

The puppy and I soon became great friends, watching television, listening to punk albums, and eating together. We also took long walks and met lots of our neighbors. We were now part of the local dog club.

Then I had a couple of gigs with the band out of town. I wanted to cancel the shows and stay home with PJ, but knew everyone would be disappointed. So I went and played. The whole time I bitched to my band, and our sales-girl pal, Monica, that I missed PJ They all called me a pussy, and told me to be more punk rock. At our show in Philly, Monica made a sign that said, "I Love PJ" and stuck it on the back of my leather jacket. All night people were asking me who PJ was and I told them he was my puppy. It didn't even occur to me how they knew the name PJ I was in puppy heaven.

*

"You are the cutest thing I've ever seen," said the brunette, to PJ. PJ just wagged his nubby tail, and licked her hands as she caressed his tiny head. "You are so sweet," she cooed, and the dog ate it up, jumping up on his hind legs and doing that little puppy dance.

"What's his name?" she asked.

"Oh, now you talk to me," I said, snidely. I was tired of being ignored for a puppy. Everyone looked at him and played with him. Me? I was just his servant. The guy who took him around. His chauffeur. His butler. His poop cleaner.

"So?" she asked.

" PJ, his name is PJ," I said.

"Well," she said to the dog, "you certainly are a cute puppy, PJ! What's your dad's name?"

PJ just licked and danced around. He hasn't mastered the English language yet.

"I'm George, punk rock!" I said to the girl fondling my puppy.

"I'm Andrea," said the girl with the glass-cleaner eyes. She then told me it was great meeting me and PJ. An hour later, after she'd told me her whole life story, she asked when she could see PJ and me again. If I'd known it was this easy to meet girls with a dog, I'd have never picked up a guitar.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. Thanks to all my great friends who helped me through this second and more difficult surgery. Thank you for being there for me and I love you all.
2. My new book, *Surfing Armegoddon: Fishnets, Facists & Body Fluids in Florida*, should be out any second on Soft Skull. You can get it anywhere. You'll love it. Tons of bad sex and good punk rock.
3. www.georgetabb.com for more information and to write me and whatever.
4. Since I've been really sick, I've quite bonded with my PSP. PlayStation Portable. I'm gonna write more about this very soon, but the thing is amazing and *is* punk rock. Check out Burnout: Legends and the new Marvel Fighting Game from EA. Also, Hot Shots Golf and Coded Arms, if you are into first-person shooters like me. Next week, GTA for the thing! Woohoo! For those of you who think these video games aren't punk rock, then I want you to tell me where in the world anyone could get a job making games about every fantasy they've ever had, getting to make cool designs, and tell neat stories. And you don't have to be corporate. That is punk rock to me. More punk rock than anything on TV these days, or, for the most part, college radio. Now Internet radio, that's another story!
5. Since I've been working with the video game industry for a while, I have run into a lot of familiar faces. A lot of people I used to know who went to shows "back in the day" who are now as creative as ever. A shout-out to my pals Kristina Kirk and Chase, and my punk rock pals Alex Porter, Kevin, and Tom in France! Yay!!!!

Well, it's way past deadline and the MRR overlords are being paragons of patience by granting me a merciful extension. Luckily this extension allowed time not only for additional midterm study time, but also occasion for the equally necessary purchase of the new CRYPTOPSY album, *Once Was Not* (Century Media). I really am at a loss to describe just how monumentally amazing this record is. Within the first thirty seconds of the second track, "In the Kingdom Where Everything Dies, the Sky is Mortal" (how great is that title?) it was obvious that not only was this unquestionably the best record of the year, but the best death metal record in several years, and most significantly, perhaps the band's own best record. They've lost longtime main guitarist Jon Levasseur, leaving only Alex Auburn, rhythm guitarist on their last album, *And Then You'll Beg*, handling all guitar duties, but he doesn't seem to have any problem with that. The riffs are everything CRYPTOPSY has become known for—insanely chaotic, technical, and unpredictable yet still completely catchy. The big news on this record is that it sees the long-awaited return of original vocalist Lord Worm, who's been absent since '96's classic *None So Vile*. I never minded replacement Mike DiSalvo all that much—his barking style was just a minor distraction—but then Aquarius Records went and ruined it by comparing him to a death metal Rodney Dangerfield and forever changed the way I heard him. In any event, Mr. Worm's strangled howls and classically influenced lyrics are a welcome return to form.

But let's get to the heart of the matter: the drumming. I know, I know, I talk about drumming a lot, but I think what we have here is what in Freshman Humanities class is known as a paradigm shift. Even by Flo's own already first-rank standards, the intensity, speed, and complexity is so beyond what even the top guys are doing, it really redefines what humans are capable of behind the drum kit. Sure, the ORIGIN and NILE guys might be faster overall, but I don't think anyone plays this fast with so much variety, creativity and such a concerted emphasis on invention and unpredictability, tempered all the while with tastefulness and catchiness. Plus, he's doing fucking gravity blasts now. After repeated listens (and I have honestly not listened to a single other record since buying this), my jaw still hits the floor when he hits those beats—I'm not sure the ear can discern distinct beats much faster than that—and with one hand! Even for longtime fans of the band and the genre, you've just never heard anything like this. So complete, so masterful, so overwhelming, I am in complete awe…

Well, before I got my hands on *Once Was Not*, my favorite death metal record of the year (and I suppose it's getting to be about time to start compiling these sorts of lists) was easily *The Killing Plan* from New York's THE DYING LIGHT on Willowtip Records (www.willowtip.com). I already mentioned these guys in last month's column, but I feel the sheer, let's say, awesomeness of this record warrants further mention. Although boasting some impressive guitar solos, these guys aren't terribly technical and the drumming is tastefully, almost purposefully restrained. Instead, they rely on relentless brutality and an album's worth of excellent riffs that seamlessly flow from one to another (most notably on the album's best track, the instrumental "Haunting Recollections"). Upon a good month's worth of solid listening, it occurred to me that these guys in a way bring to mind SOILENT GREEN, not so much in sound as in structure and lineage. Both bands' guitarists began in oppressively slow, heavy, ugly bands (CATTLEPRESS and EYEHATEGOD respectively), and the more current incarnations are the logical result of placing these riffs in a death/grind setting—that is, at full speed. I'd say a pretty successful mixture in both cases (more on SOILENT soon).

Unfortunately, the same can't be said for another recent release on Willowtip's roster—the domestic release of GOROD's *Neurotripsicks*. Why the Willowtip guys felt the need to re-release this is beyond me—

the brand of quasi-technical death metal from this French outfit (who recently, wisely, changed their name from GORGASM) is a limp mix of effete PANTERA-styled start-stop riffing and noodly boring lead guitar wankery overtop, all with thin production and a complete lack of interesting songwriting. Oh well, with the imminent release of new albums from a good half-dozen awesome bands (ARSIS, NEURAXIS, WATCHMAKER, CROWPATH and the mighty KILL THE CLIENT), there'll be plenty of good new stuff on the horizon from this great label, and I'm sure I'll have plenty to say about 'em soon.

Back to SOILENT GREEN, the good folks at Relapse have finally graced me with a nice big stack of schwag to review, and definitely the most highly-anticipated of the bunch is the new album from those long-running New Orleans swamp rats, *Confrontation*. Aside from the obvious recent misfortune befallen on their hometown, the band has suffered its own personal tragedies, including numerous car accidents and the fatal shooting of their bassist a year ago. As whatever small consolation, all this bad luck has at least resulted in the band's darkest, most aggressive, and arguably best album since their devastating debut, *Pussysoul*. The band really seems back in classic form—more speed, more bile, in the vocals, more non-repeating, odd-time, impossible-to-follow song structures, as well as a couple interludes and a ridiculously over-sized lyrical layout. If I had to pick one point of criticism, some of the more SABBATH-y stoner rock riffs sound a bit out of place and overly deliberate at times, almost like they know they have this reputation for mixing southern sludge and grind and feel the need to throw in those parts on every song (and point two—what's up with ripping off your own riff from "Branding of Thieves" on "Theory of Pride in Tragedy"?). But it's their faster moments and the dizzying time changes that have always floored me, and the good news is, these elements are present and then some—lots of blast beats throughout, shifting effortlessly into impossible off-time riff arrangements. I wasn't completely blown away by SOILENT's last album, *A Deleted Symphony for the Beaten Down*, but this new release has more than revitalized my interest in this great, inimitable band.

Certainly not as well known but easily as good is the new album from the dubiously dubbed RUMPELSTILTSKIN GRINDER. Adhering to "Boy Named Sue" logic, the band members must've reasoned that if they self-applied the most retardedly awkward band name ever, they'd have to kick more ass than Jimmy Superfly Snuka to gain anyone's respect. And ass they kick indeed. Contrary to what the band's name would suggest, this band is neither German power metal nor grindcore, instead perpetrating a spot-on perfect replica of classic 80s thrash metal a la NUCLEAR ASSAULT, KREATOR, and *Among the Living*-era ANTHRAX. They're no mere copycats though; the playing on this is insane over-the-top sweep-picking guitar solos and relentless double bass enough to level asphalt. Best of all, they've just got great songs with super catchy riffs and sing along vocals—"Orange and Black Attack" and "Grab a Shovel (We've Got Bodies to Bury)" being stand-outs. "Ode to Tanks" wins on name alone. As evident by their name, song titles, and the band photo of the group playing basketball with a skull, there's a strong sense of humor here, but this is no irony metal. This is thrash made by people who were listening to it back then and are paying tribute to the genre with a modern upgrade to current levels of skill and technicality. Definitely one of the best metal albums of the year.

Also from the Relapse camp, but unfortunately paling in comparison is the new release from Belgium's LENG TCH'E. I was pretty surprised to see that Relapse had signed these guys and I wondered if there was something I was missing on their previous albums, several of which I'd heard but not given much heed to. The new record, *The Process of Elimination*, isn't doing much to convince me otherwise, and I don't really understand what "the big leagues" of grind labels sees in them. They're a good band, don't get me wrong—fast, well-produced grind with fairly thought-provoking lyrics But with so many great grind bands around these days, there's nothing noteworthy about their approach to the genre that merits much distinction. A second rate BLOOD DUSTER knock-off is what it sounds like to me, with few memorable moments.

But then they go and re-issue one of the all-time best grindcore records ever and it's hard to find much fault with the label. Hopefully this record will be old news to most readers of this column, but Relapse has apparently gotten their mitts on the rights to ROTTEN SOUND's *Murderworks*, originally released on Necropolis/Death Vomit Records in 2002. If for some reason you missed this back then, A) what were you thinking and B) do not waste one minute more and get your ass to a record store and buy this masterpiece. When their latest album *Exit* was released earlier this year, I had to resist lavishing too much praise on it, simply because it couldn't help but be a step down, great as it was, from this masterpiece. Again, it's all about the drumming. Kai's ability to innovate, with classy fills and off-time cymbal work at mach ten speeds is simply incredible, as are the sheer variety of different blasts he conjures up. The first five tracks all feature different types of blast beats—subtle variations that you might have to be a big drum nerd like me to appreciate but which, if you pick 'em out, are really quite impressive. The sheer speed alone warrants respect, but it's the fact that, as always, they manage to write unique, distinct, catchy songs within the grind context that really sets them apart. To be considered in the same league as *Scum*, *Need to Control*, *Misery Index* and *Jouhou*, this is an absolute milestone for the genre and simply one of the finest grindcore albums ever recorded. Don't miss it a second time.

Taking a one hundred eighty-degree turn, there's another entry in the ISIS-clone war saga, this being a group straight outta Omaha, Nebraska entitled BACK WHEN with their album, *We Sang as Ghosts*. You know the drill—seven songs in an hour, quiet to loud dynamics, long build-ups, crashing NEUROSIS heaviness on the loud parts, and melancholic melody. They get a big fat zero out of ten for originality, copping every inch of their sound direct from ISIS, but that being said, I suppose they do what they do well, and most of the songs retain my interest more often than not. If you can't get enough of this style, check 'em out (Shock Value , www.shockvaluerecords.com).

Kicking considerably more ass is the second three-song EP from South Carolina's rock wizards BARONESS, creatively titled *Second* (Hyperrealist, www.hyperrealist.com). This belongs in the same categorical lump as that including (old) CAVE IN, OLD MAN GLOOM, FORENSICS and KYLESA—bands experimenting with the tired metalcore formula and subsequently sounding only tangentially related, that being a good thing. I think BARONESS keeps releasing three song-albums because they cram more riffs, change-ups, and ideas (good ones at that) into one seven-minute song than most bands muster in a full-length. They're even more experimental on this record than before, a bit slower and not so schizophrenic, instead opening up the songs with sparse passages of controlled guitar manipulation before segueing into great breakdown riffs. Definitely a

unique band worthy of attention.

Shit, had tons of other stuff to review this month (apologies to Selfmadegod, GOD$ DICK, and everyone else who's sent stuff recently)—guess I got a bit verbose with all the metal. Really though, 2005 has been one of the best years for metal and grind in ages, and there's still two months to go. I will review everything eventually, just bear with me, and keep in touch. Till then...

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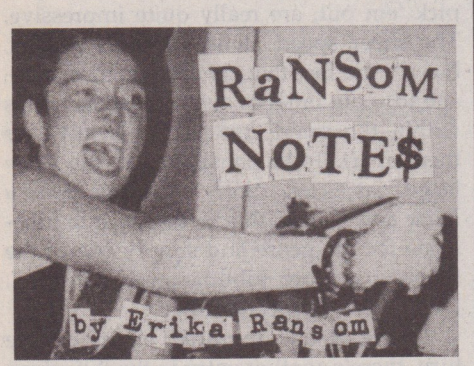

Notes from the Black Book (Part Two)

11 October. Tuesday.

German fields roll by the windows, somewhere north of Kiel on the A7 highway.

Sitting in the van, crossing fields on a concrete river, we are traveling from Hamburg, through most of Denmark, to the northern city of Aalborg.

The tape player up front is playing the MISFITS "She is on the run!"

Today is the sixth day of the SIGNAL LOST European tour, and I've been with them for the last three days. Philip Fala is driving, Chris is up front in the co-pilot chair, Stan, Ashley, and Jasmine are sitting in the middle bench, and Lydia and I are camped out in the back. Jasmine has fallen asleep with her head against the window, Ashley's head is on her shoulder, and Stan is staring out the window. Lydia is drawing, and I am yet again scribbling away in my black book, pirate skull grinning on the cover.

Oh, my head hurts a little today.

Can rose colored glasses replace sleep?

9 October. Sunday. Hamburg.

We arrived at the Rondenbarg Wagonplatz as night began to fall. The entrance was a closed gate, surrounded by brush and trees, leading to a road that disappeared into the darkness. Not exactly welcoming.

Mariana jumped out of the van and swung open the gate, and Philip drove through. I had a sort of sinking feeling as the van slowly bumped along the rough road, the headlights bouncing off a few of the caravans and trailers that made up the squat.

Everything was quiet.

The hall was a small building at the end of the road. It was put together as a wooden shack, with a low ceiling, a bar at one end, and an ancient piano standing at the other.

Sitting on a long wooden bench outside the hall, we waited for the concert organizer to appear. From the darkness of the caravans, there was the sharp sound of someone playing violin, scratching furiously on the strings. Meanwhile, from the open doorway, light and sound spilled out, and we heard a punk record playing, the two very different sounds merging in the night.

There weren't any flyers up for the show, and no one was around. Things didn't look very promising.

A man old enough to be my grandfather, with long gray dreads, came up to the band and said, "We were not expecting you."

8 October. Saturday. Bremen.

Stiv and I went to the outdoor vegetable market in the city, looking for free veggies to make dinner for the bands that evening, including SIGNAL LOST.

At the market, I was amazed at the system and how we were treated. No need to look through dumpsters, no need to pick through trash, or even watch out for the cops. Ha!

Every few minutes, a market merchant would carry boxes of vegetables over to the trash bins. There was a crate of mushrooms in which a few had gone bad, heads of cauliflower with a few brown spots, bean sprouts that were a little wilted in places, perfectly fine grapes that were falling off the stem, pears that were ripe, slightly wilted lettuce, and all sorts of veggies and fruits that were perfectly edible, but not picturesque enough to put on display.

The merchants handed over the crates of vegetables to the people patiently waiting, talking, smoking and hanging out by the trash bins. There was a woman from the G18 squat, three younger punks collecting for themselves, Smiegal also from the Friesen Crew, and also a couple of older men.

On this day at least, everyone who wanted food left with their bags full.

After about an hour, Stiv and I left with a backpack of veggies, and both of Smiegal's bike baskets were packed as well. We still needed to buy more vegetables and soy milk, but the free stash was a big help towards dinner for the bands and volunteers.

And, doesn't it make sense to give food to people who want or need it, rather than throw food away?

Shouldn't this concept be obvious to everyone?

13 October. Thursday. Border of Denmark and Sweden.

Jakob from Copenhagen has joined us in the van and is telling stories on the way to Malmö. I'm sitting in the back, comfortably between the bass drum and Lydia, trying to catch time in small paper sheets.

As we cross over the enormous Öresund bridge to Sweden, the highway continues, even as the land disappears beneath us. Long minutes pass as the horizon opens, and we are suspended high above the sea, traveling fast, held up by steel and concrete. The waves are small moving ridges below us, and the bridge ahead converges into the distance.

Cables and gray clouds blur by the window, and I think of the show last night.

12 October. Wednesday. Copenhagen.

Ungdomshuset is a massive, four story brick building and cultural center that has been collectively maintained and squatted for the past 23 years.

When we arrived, I was immediately struck by the graffiti striking out from almost every wall. The images are colorful and bold, and I spent about an hour exploring, looking through the lens of my small camera, trying to capture a little bit of the spirit of these enormous images. A fantastic green mermaid demon woman grinned down at me, swimming near a window. A horse, half-animal and part-machine, ran above the door to the large kitchen in the basement. Larger-than-life abstract characters, a crowd of people possibly going to a punk show, each seeming to have a story and personality of their own, animated the many walls of the large main stairwell. A white head with monster teeth, easily seven feet tall, grinned a ghastly smile. Nearby, a punk woman was dancing on the wall.

Everywhere there was a spirit of art and story, and often, resistance.

While looking for the sleeping room, going up the narrow back stairs, I opened a door on the second floor by mistake.

I caught my breath—this was not the room full of bunk beds and grubby mattresses I was expecting.

Instead, I was looking at a massive expanse of space. I was on a balcony, overlooking a huge concert room, and the floor was about fourteen feet below me. The

room was bigger than my high school gymnasium, with the balcony going along one wall. At one end of the room there was a high stage, and behind it, a large painting of a fist destroying a swastika.

Looking out over the empty, massive concert room, I could only imagine the place filled with punks and chaos and music.

This cavernous space, which I found by accident behind a random door, is the site of the famous K-Town Festival. From what I've heard, K-Town is the largest politically inspired, DIY punk festival in Europe. Three thousand punks from around the world converge for three days of bands, workshops, stalls, and of course, parties that continue every night.

There is also a Bike War, held in a large field, where three hundred punks watch as brave-hearted contestants battle on welded bike monsters. The winner, I'm told, is the last biker able to peddle forward!

Huzzah!

Before the show started, there was a soup kitchen where people could buy a cheap, but very tasty hot meal. Potatoes, spicy chili, and salad were served. Delicious! The room was filled with people who had come for dinner, music played on the speakers, and candles were set out on long wooden picnic tables.

The bar was a solid wooden structure, with smoke curling upwards in the lights that came down like pillars onto the long counter. I ordered a tasty organic beer, and went outside and hung out with Chris by the fire pit. We talked about his other bands SEVERED HEAD OF STATE and J CHURCH, tours and traveling.

The show finally started, in a smaller concert room (which was still large) in a room next to the bar. The PA was loud, the sound was good, and SIGNAL LOST played a fun set. The crowd wasn't much into dancing, but kept wanting the band to play more. Good times!

The next day, while walking around Copenhagen before we had to leave for Aalborg, Jakob told us more about how Ungdomshuset is being threatened by eviction. Although a previous city mayor had given the building up to the squatters in the early 80s (rather than fight the squatters anymore!) the city had recently taken ownership of the building again. In a very underhanded deal, the city then sold the building to a Christian church. Turns out these god-fearing folks are determined to drive out the "Satan-worshippers" of the Ungdomshuset.

Sadly, this story is not a twisted joke. The Christians are allocating a large amount of their church money towards this critical "mission" of taking over the building.

It's a tale of fucking stupid Christians, capitalist bastards, and state control.

Right now, the collective has vowed to physically and legally defend the Ungdomshuset from eviction, and the case is in court and protests have been planned. However, with the city on the side of the crazy Christians, it doesn't look promising. For more information on this amazing squat and their current struggle, look up www.ungdomshuset.dk.

Good luck to the Ungdomshuset. Evict the state, not the squatters!

13 October. Thursday. Malmö.

Sitting on a cobblestone sidewalk in a small town in Sweden, we drank bottles of cheap Danish beer on a warm October night. A few of us enjoyed a nice hash cigarette, and the taste was sweet on my lips.

After the show, the entire crew—Jasmine, Stan, Philip, Peter, myself, Lydia, Ashley and Chris—hung out on the street in Malmö's square, a large open space of brick in the middle of town. The moon was half full and the sky clear as we talked about tours, bands, cities, and places to play, funny experiences on the road, and details of our lives.

I love these moments, when there is a pause in the bustle of days, and nothing is more important than easy heartfelt conversation.

While sitting outside the closed shops, drinking our bottles, we watched a trail of people stumble from the bar across the street. We didn't have any Kronos to spend at the bar, and besides, it was so nice to be outside, and enjoy a rare warm night in October. It had been a fun show, but so packed and loud, it was nice to relax in the square afterwards.

The show had been held in a small concrete room next to a parking garage, in sort of a basement, next door to a gas station. The place, I was told, was a Communist cafe. There were a few books, political posters on the walls, and tables and chairs.

A PA was brought in, but there wasn't a stage, and the bands set up their amps and the drums in the corner. Definitely, this set-up is one of my favorite ways to watch a band.

The collective brought food—mashed potatoes and a savory tofu stew, salad, and even vegan cobbler for dessert—and served a soup kitchen. Again, a tasty and healthy but very cheap dinner (donations) for whoever wanted it.

The first band, FLYKTPLAN, had a powerful woman singer, a kick-ass woman guitarist, and delivered classic crust! SIGNAL LOST was very good, and it was fun to see them without a stage, punks dancing up front, and Ashley singing in the crowd for most of the set. The SKITKIDZ were loud as fuck, extreme Swedish thrash—and it was so cool to see them play in their hometown! The place was totally full of people dancing, trying to see, standing on chairs, or sitting on the counter of the bar.

When the show ended, the beer cans and trash were cleared away, the PA and band equipment loaded into the vans, and the place locked up for the night. A couple of hours later, we were sitting in the square, enjoying our beers and the night air.

Eventually, the bar across the way closed, and a stream of drunk punks came stumbling in our direction. Soon, a woman was pissing in front of us, yelling at us to give her some paper. I did, and her stream of urine flowed ten feet into the square. Ha!

Someone dropped a bottle, smashing glass and alcohol everywhere. Ashley collected the green shards, fearing one of the dogs would split a paw open. The woman who had just pissed then started puking on the sidewalk, and this is when most of us said, "Goodnight, Malmö!"

14 October. Friday.

In the van again.

There is a low rumble of tires spinning on concrete, and the classic drum beat of a punk band playing in the tape deck up front.

Today I walked around Malmö, the streets off the square, looking for tobacco. There are lots of little "everything for ten Krona" stores that sell beads, fake flowers, kid's toys, car accessories, and a mountain of colorful plastic. There are also several Turkish, Pakistani and Asian shops, selling snacks and cigarettes, watches, phone cards, luggage and "American" clothes. I walked through the square where we were drinking last night, now in the afternoon sun, the area transformed into a lively vegetable market.

Many small carts filled the square, and a calm bustle of people looked at the wares. Beautiful eggplants, carrots and raspberries were on display, everything fresh. Pots of sweet smelling herb plants, striking green, blue and purple sat on wooden shelves. There were carts full of cut flowers and cartons of local eggs.

9 October. Sunday. Continued.

"We were not expecting you," the old man with the gray dreads said.

Turns out the show "organizer" hadn't

been seen in town for a week, and no one at the wagonplatz knew that SIGNAL LOST was coming. Err, surprise!

"But, it's OK." he continued. "Here is a crate of beer for the band. I hope Astor is OK. We don't have anything else at the moment."

He put down a large plastic crate filled with about 30 beers (Astor was the brand, the German equivalent to Pabst) in front of us. We were all sitting on a long bench in the dark, outside the shack at the wagonplatz, wondering what to do and what was going on.

"Yes, definitely, thanks! That's great! Danke very much!" we all said at once.

About an hour later, the man came back with a metal cart—the type used in airports for luggage—moving a PA system into the shack.

MASS MIERDA showed up in their enormous van, a converted German postal truck, and their crew of ten people was a nice addition to our small assemblage drinking beer in the dark.

Meanwhile, Philip, Marianna and I were all typing furiously into our phones, looking for a place to sleep in Hamburg.

I typed Andi, "Good chance the band needs a place to stay. How do you feel about company?" The underlying message, "Want seven people to crash your small apartment tonight?" What are friends for, except to cause trouble?

Another hour passed by, and then someone told us dinner was ready. I was amazed that without expecting us, the wagonplatz folks made dinner for the two bands and the people traveling with them. Salad, rice, stew, and bread. Yum! How many show places do you know that can come up with dinner for twenty people in a couple of hours?

By the time dinner was over, the PA had been set up at one end of the hall, next to the piano, and people had started drinking at the bar and showing up to see the bands.

MASS MIERDAS from Barcelona was dual vocal thrash crust punk, very sincere and full of energy. SIGNAL LOST played a good set as usual, and I danced with Lydia, videotaped a few songs, had a beer and enjoyed the tunes.

Everything seemed to turn out very well, despite the show organizer forgetting to set up the show. Cheers to the wagonplatz folks, dealing with all this at the last minute!

The show ended late, and we ended up going to Patrick's and Goran's apartment, above Unkle Otto's, a punk bar run by punks. Patrick said there was enough room for the band to stay in the small apartment, as Goran was out of town, and, er, he was sure Goran wouldn't mind us crashing in his room. What are friends and roommates for?

Patrick opened the bar for us, turning on the lights and putting a record on the DJ table. We played kicker, and hung out until late, Jasmine serving drinks behind the bar, and SLIME playing on the stereo.

12 October. Wednesday afternoon.

At the gas station we picked up a free tourist book titled, *Denmark: A Fairy Tale in Your Mind.*

What does that mean?

I am on a ferry, rushing across the open water of the Kattegat towards Copenhagen, wind in my face, enjoying the sun, thinking about the show last night in Aalborg, Denmark. SIGNAL LOST played at the 1000 FRYD, and it was like no other punk show I've ever been to before.

For one thing, there were candles and flowers decorating the bar and tables, at a punk show! I kept thinking, "If this was in Boston, a punk would have set fire to something by now."

The 1000 FRYD, from the outside, is an unassuming yellow building on a quiet narrow street. However, looking at the old posters inside of great bands, and the upcoming events bulletin board, it doesn't take long to realize the 1000 FRYD has hosted touring punk bands for a long time, along with providing an important space for local cultural projects and radical groups.

A collective has owned the building since 1984, and the three-story building is well used. There is a bar, a concert area/cafe/bar, a band sleeping room (with clean sheets and blankets, even a nice shower—really amazing), an office and Internet computer, and practice rooms for bands.

My mouth almost fell open when they told me on the third floor there is a recording studio for bands, available to anyone. (To be sure I'm not making this up, check out their web site at www.1000fryd.dk)

There was a soup kitchen before the show (the kitchen is all vegan), with fresh bread donated from a local bakery, salad, spaghetti, tofu with mushrooms, and freshly made humus. I hardly eat this well at home! And at the bar, I drank a locally brewed porter that was dark and tasty. Yum!

While the sun was setting, we walked around Aalborg and saw only a little bit of the city. A few blocks away there was an industrial canal, and smoke stacks emitted dark clouds in the distance.

Only a few people came to the show, but it was fun anyway, especially for a Tuesday night. We were all tired from the night before, drinking into the early morning at Onkle Otto's. I spent the time between dinner and the show hanging out in the sleeping room, sprawled out on a red velvet coach, sipping porter and talking with Ashley, Chris, Lydia, and Stan. They related fun tales from their recent Mexican tour, traveling on an enormous bus with 40 people!

ANALENA from Croatia were good, melodic hardcore with angry female vocals. Their two previous shows had been canceled, so they had driven directly from Croatia to Aalborg—a 24-hour trip across Europe. Damn!

I hung out with them after the show, sipping Jager with the singer on the sidewalk, as she insisted it was good for me. We laughed at how quiet the streets were, and wrapped up the night sharing stories, and I wished them good luck on the rest of their tour.

On the ferry as I write this, I think, "Was the 1000 FYRES just a punk fairy tale in my mind?"

10 October. Hamburg. Monday.

I woke up thinking, "Where am I?"

"Oh, I'm on tour. In my sleeping bag, on a floor in Hamburg."

SIGNAL LOST is playing in my head again, "Once again, the old men sing the hangman's song / Expecting all their children to march and sing along..."

I got up, still tired, and made my way to the bathroom. Splashed water on my face, cupped water from the sink faucet over my head, put my bra back on and brushed my teeth.

I was trying to wake up, feeling a little lost.

Tour is always an adventure, and everyone in the band was great, we were having so much fun. But I was also already missing Bremen, and thinking of the cute crusty who I had kissed good-bye.

Nothing left to do but lace up my boots. Fasten my two spiked belts around my waist, and pack my sleeping bag.

Ready for another day on the road.

The song continues in my head as we walked out the door towards the van, "Down on these dirty streets / Where we sing our songs of peace / Even in this dark cloud a ray of hope remains..."

Endnotes.

More tales next month of Finland and London. Thanks so much to Ashley, Philip, Chris, Stan, Jasmine, and Lydia for being so awesome! If you haven't read SIGNAL

LOST's interview in MRR, well, go get your back issue right now. You can hear some of their music and find out more about this Austin, Texas based group on MySpace.com. Great people and great music, what more can I say?

Also, thanks to everyone who put us up, made us feel welcome, and shared a beer. Cheers to everyone who is part of the international conspiracy to enjoy life outside the capitalist machine.

Solidarity and Blazing Guitars,
Erika (e_bitchcrew@yahoo.com)

Where we lived there was no way to get back from Glasgow after about eleven at night. Even then the last train would only take you so far, Motherwell probably, then you'd have to get a taxi, probably about a tenner. Out of the question. So Sandy and I decided to just stay out all night after the GBH gig, sleep in the bus station and wait for the first bus home in the morning.

I don't remember much about the gig. Can't even remember who the other bands were. Toxic Ephex maybe? We hadn't been to many punk gigs at the time and they could be quite intimidating for young kids like us—from small towns, and not particularly streetwise—lots of scary-looking big skinheads, and pissed-off looking crusties that would demand your spare change. This was in the venue, not outside on the street. Anyway, the bands played, people pushed each other about a bit, and frankly, it wasn't all that impressive. GBH were loud and fast and all that, but in their punk clothes and "charged" hair, it all seemed like such a cliché, even then. We drifted out of the venue and out onto the street. Time passed pretty slowly. We just walked around Glasgow's darkened streets, unfamiliar at nighttime, with all the shops closed. We looked in shop windows and planned what our band would sound like, once we'd managed to get some instruments and other people to play with us. We got to the bus station and took turns lying along the bench seats. Neither of us could really sleep. Sketchy people kept checking us out, especially this one total pedo looking guy in a trenchcoat. We eventually legged it out of there.

Down towards the river we found a comfortable alcove to hang out in. The sun was starting to come up and the prostitutes were finishing their shifts as the bin men and street cleaners were starting theirs. One scantily clad but worse-for-wear working girl crossed the street shakily, only to be accosted by a cop. He couldn't see us and probably assumed he was alone on the street with her. It looked like he was asking her some questions, and his face betrayed his utter contempt and disgust for the creature before him. He grabbed her bag and looked through it. He obviously didn't find what he was looking for, but he scattered the contents into the gutter anyway, then turned and walked away. The woman bent down to her knees, gathered up her belongings as if this was just another day, and then tottered away on her high heels. As she passed by, she noticed us, and came over.

"Got any Valium?" she drawled. We didn't. "Know where ah could git some?"

No. Sorry. She went on her way. One night on the street and we looked like the type of people you could score Valium off, or at least, like we'd know where you could get it? Hey, at that time local family doctors were handing it out like sweeties to any housewife that had the odd bad day, so I suppose it wasn't out of the question that we'd nicked some from our mum's medicine cabinets.

We hung out there for a while until we were sure we saw the trenchcoat pedo from the bus station coming down the road, and we took off back up to the station. It was almost time for the bus anyway.

I'll always remember my first and only GBH gig, but not for anything to do with the band. The self-righteousness, the hatred on that policeman's face during his brief interchange with the prostitute, his total disregard for her as a human being, was palpable. All right, by society's standards, you don't get much lower than a middle-aged drug addict Glaswegian prostitute, but it was clear that this man felt the need to make himself feel better by belittling her. It wasn't my first (or last) experience with the heavy-handedness of certain bad apples in Her Majesty's Constabulary, but it's one that I'll never forget. The message was loud and clear. On one side, all the power. On the other, none whatsoever. That side can do whatever the fuck it wants. This side just has to take it.

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Bad Luck Dept: I filed my last column from my brother's house in Scotland. I was home for my gran's 90th birthday celebration. A couple of days into the trip, I fell off my bike while riding at a skatepark and broke a bone in my elbow.

"You fell off your bike? How old are you?!" I heard countless variations of this question at the hospital, or when people inquired about my cast. Maybe it isn't common for a 35-year-old to break his arm falling off a BMX bike, but is it really such a big deal? The implied meaning in the question is that by 35 you're supposed to have put that sort of thing behind you. Not to mention that many people who asked that question didn't even know I'd been riding a BMX bike in a skatepark—for all they knew, I could have had a bike accident riding a ten-speed to work or whatever. The point is, by the time you're my age, you're supposed to be driving everywhere, and any recreation you take part in should be passive—preferably watching one of the mainstream sports.

There is something of a double standard, though. If I'd got my injury playing 5-a-side football, no one would have batted an eyelid. Similarly, if I'd explained it away by saying I was hammered and fell down the stairs, I'd have been greeted with a chuckle and a "could happen to anyone."

Maybe I am just clinging to my youth, unable to let go. Some might say the same about my continued attraction to punk rock. Maybe it's true. Aching muscles and ringing ears aside, when I'm carving the bowl at Alameda skatepark or down the front watching This Is My Fist at Gilman, I still sometimes feel like the kid who stayed up all night after a GBH gig in the mid-80s. Is there really anything wrong with that?

Email me at allan@dropout.cc or write to PO Box 22971, Oakland, CA 94609, USA. I maintain a website at www.dropout.cc but it's updated very sporadically.

Painting It Over

Recently, I went to see *Quality of Life*, a movie about graffiti artists in San Francisco's Mission District, the neighborhood most famous over the past several decades for wave after wave of gentrification battles. I wasn't expecting much from the movie except for a few laughs—it's always amusing to see somewhere or

something you're familiar with horrifyingly misrepresented. But the movie was actually more entertaining than I expected—the lighting was dramatic, the camerawork stylized, the music relatively energizing and the opening shot of a naked buff boy with a shaved head jumping out of bed and throwing on his thick comfy hoodie was enough to keep me entertained for at least 20 or 30 minutes.

The movie did reveal some useful tips for shoplifting. For example, if you need to get spray paint, just deliver Chinese food to a paint store. Then, while you argue with the clerk about whether he/she ordered this feast, your friend ducks into the dimly-lit aisles and makes off with a feast for neighborhood walls. Never mind that no store in San Francisco—and certainly not in the oh-so-hot-and-trendy Mission—keeps their spray paint outside of locked cases. I guess that's the secret of Chinese food—bite into an egg roll and boom the locks on the glass cases vanish and you can fill up your bike messenger bag with every color in the rainbow.

Oh, and if you spill pizza sauce on your brand new sneakers just before going to your former-tagger-friend's art opening, just duck into a local clothing store. While your buddy tries on a hat and flirts with the girl (wink-wink) you'll have plenty of time to slip into the window display, take the shoes off the mannequin, switch them for your saucy damage, and exit the store just as your friend reveals that no, he actually doesn't want to purchase that cute knit-cap-with-a-visor-thing . Okay, I've got to admit that if I was that girl behind the counter and my Lane Garrison (yes, that's the naked boy with the shaved head from the beginning, only now he's not naked anymore—at least not until I enter the picture). Oh wait—I'm getting distracted again—my point is just that if Lane Garrison came to my makeup counter, I could certainly be waylaid for—oh—20 or 30 minutes.

Anyway, this movie does reveal the sophisticated, intellectual straightboy slang of the moment. When Lane walks into the underground-but-oh-so-exclusive graffiti-artist-transitioning-into-art-world art opening, the bartender hands him a drink and then passes one to that sassy lady over at the bar and says to Lane: "that's to get rid of the handicapped sign on your nuts." But back to the opening—it's getting out of hand because Lane's Best Tagging Buddy is off inhaling rails of white lightning off a freshly sharpened pocketknife (so tough! a little blood only helps with the high!). That's right—emo-boy buddy is suddenly amped-up and getting into a fistfight with art trash, and Lane has to break it up and then the whole thing is called off, they've fucked up their tagger buddy's gallery splash.

Oh—did I mention that our heroes are white and tight in a sea of Mission conflicts? There's the Latino neighborhood—or wait, are there any Latinos in this movie? Oh—Lane's father, of course, with that paper-white Irish son of his (but oh, those lips!). And the graffiti artist making it is a potentially multi-racial multi-talented man of color switching it up on white expectations. He gets to utter a few sentences.

Then we have the callous evil yuppie boss—who just happens to be black. And the white mother with the mixed-race child—but no sign of any men of color around her (except the evil black boss—oh…). Then there's Lane's apparently Latino father, who gets to yell at him for not getting out of bed fast enough (oh Lane, I'd never yell at you for that!). There are a few young taggers of color pushed out of our heroes' pristine alabaster artist train tunnel. And there's the high school kid of color lectured by his probation officer for tagging—yet again! His father threatens to beat him up. But where did this family come from? They don't appear in the movie either before or after.

Oh—and don't forget, the evil black cop in charge at our heroes' community service ditch-digging experience. Clearly, there's a very conscious attempt at reverse stereotyping that fails to do anything more than erase cultural histories and replace them with our white heroes fighting it out on the tough streets of San Francisco's magnificent Mission graffiti canvass.

But wait—there's a Buddhist temple! Inside, the model minority gallery graffiti champion/sell-out is working on his new…mandala. It's an ornate number made of carefully poured grains of colored sand. He's been working on it for a whole week when Lane shows up, just as he's pouring the last few grains of green and blue. He turns to Lane, and says: It's for you.

Just kidding. That's my line. But Lane isn't too keen. Even though he's grown up in San Francisco's multi-culti Mission moment, he has no idea what Gallery Girl is giving when GG sweeps a whole week of painstaking labor into the dustpan, Lane gasps and musters his most clever verbage: What the fuck you doin' man?

GG: It's a mandala. LG: Nelson Mandela? GG: No man, a mandala—it teaches us the impermanence of life. Lane has been tagging for all of his teens and into his twenties, but he's never grasped this concept. I guess he's never seen one of his tags covered by his father's paintbrushes, or anything (I forgot—that's Lane's job, covering up graffiti on cute Mission Victorians—what a clever plot device!).

But the highlight of the movie is when emo-boy gets a little too jumpy on juice, after the cops raid his house in the middle of the night for evidence of graffiti and he jumps out the window, and his girlfriend leaves him (with their multi-racial son!), then suddenly emo boy's tagging outside a liquor store and the art trash from the gallery fight apprehends him. Art Trash: That's my fucking store! Emo-Boy: You wanna bump? Art Trash pulls out his pistol—no girl, not that pistol! This is a real fucking gun, contrasting the multi-colored tattoos up and down this splendid scenester's sexy forearms. But Emo Boy switches it up on Gun Girl and gives her the big shebang in order to flex Gun Girl's throat muscles. No, honey—not that shebang. This scenester's got a gun in her throat! Oh—did I mention that it's the middle of the day? No problem—Emo Boy holds up a cab and then switches into car chase realness all the way to his girlfriend's workplace, so he can blow his brains out in the well-lit exposed-brick office loft.

All of this leads to a touching finale. Lane climbs up on a building to finish his friend's tag, complete with a semi-religious heaven-type scene constructed in broad daylight. Then, having learned the lesson of the mandala, Lane pulls out his paint-roller and covers up the illegal art. Thank Jesus, I mean Buddha, I mean Bishop Desmond Tutu.

The filmmaker was present at the screening, and I got to ask him a question. I wanted to know whether he added the action movie ending in order to make the movie more marketable as a Hollywood product, and also whether his white tagger narrative was furthering the cultural erasure already enacted in a trendy Mission district where most taggers are not black or Latino, but straight white scenesters. I wanted to know whether the director's choice of "colorblind" (switcheroo!) casting was actually another form of cultural erasure, an attempt at addressing racism that actually ends up doing little more than normalizing straight white male entitlement..

The director didn't really know what to do with my questions. He was ready to talk about how he filmed the car chase (rent a police car and drive it around in circles), how much the film cost ("$30,000…I mean, just under a million"), and how he was able to shoot a scene with a gun (make sure you have an on-duty cop in on the racket!). But as to my questions, the director said that this movie did not have a Hollywood ending because in Hollywood, Emo Boy would have shot the gun and it wouldn't have gone off, or something like that. He repeated what was already contained in my question—that most graffiti artists in the Mission are now "skinny whiteboys from the suburbs," unlike when he had been tagging, but he presented absolutely no critique of this gentrification/colonization, except to say that he couldn't, in his heart, cast the guy with the gun as someone Latino. But he didn't address why on earth he needed a gun in the story at all. And what about the world he constructs, where taggers are completely unconcerned with (and unencumbered by) race—hello white male privilege!

But wait—the movie was based on a true story. Have you heard of Pablo Picasso? One of his feminist buddies apparently killed himself (in the graphic design studio of his runaway runway girlfriend), and this ushered on the most creative period in Picasso's life—his blue period.

But I don't think Picasso painted over those canvasses.

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Look out for my books—the most recent anthology I edited is *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation* (Soft Skull 2004) and my novel is *Pulling Taffy* (Suspect Thoughts 2003). I also edited *Dangerous Families: Queer Writing on Surviving* and *Tricks and Treats: Sex Workers Write about Their Clients*. I live for feedback, so send me love letters, naked pictures of Lane Garrison and delicious threats via www.mattbernsteinsycamore.com, resistingassimilation@hotmail.com, PO Box 640047, San Francisco, CA 94164-0047.

Here's the call for submissions for the new anthology I'm working on:

Realness Is Overrated: *Rejecting the Requirement to Pass*

What lies are people forced to tell in order to gain acceptance as "real?" When someone passes—as the "right" gender, race, class, sexuality, age, ability, body type, health status, ethnicity—or a member of the dominant religion, political party, social/educational institution, exercise trend, fashion cult or sexual practice—someone else fails. How do we break the rules and make the tools to skewer dominant cultural norms and open space for those in the margins?

I'm looking for essays that explore and critique the various systems of power seen (or not seen) in the act of passing. I'm seeking not only scathing critiques of passing into the mainstream, but also essays that examine unconventional passings and standards for inclusion in subcultures and cultures of resistance. What does it take to pass as nonmonogamous, on the DL, genderqueer, totally broke, spiritual, ghetto fabulous, anti-capitalist, outside the beauty myth, differently-abled or completely uninterested in passing as anything? How healthy can a sick person feel? What about passing as crazy in order to get disability benefits, passing as Latino or Asian to avoid being targeted as an Arab, or passing as a woman in order to marry a man for citizenship (when you've recently transitioned from female to male)?

I'm looking for essays that confront the perilous intersections of identity, categorization and community in order to challenge the very notion of belonging. I'm especially interested in confronting gender normativity within trans communities and racial profiling by individuals already marginalized by race, as well as rules of passing enforced by model minority mythologies, class striving obsessions and cultural appropriation scams.

Realness Is Overrated will make sure that nothing escapes scrutiny. If we eliminate the requirement to pass, what delicious and devastating opportunities for transformation might we create?

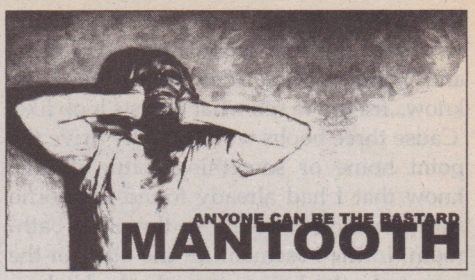
SPECIFICS: Submit non-fiction essays of up to 6,000 words. All submissions must be typed and double-spaced, and sent by mail only (no email submissions, but feel free to contact me with queries, mattilda@sbcglobal.net). Please include a short bio.

The book will be published by Seal Press (Avalon Publishing) in 2007. Contributors will be paid $60-$100 per accepted work, depending on the total number of essays included in the anthology. Contributors will also receive two copies of the book.

Deadline is January 31, 2006—but the sooner, the better.

Send submissions to:

Realness Is Overrated, c/o Mattilda, aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore, PO Box 640047, San Francisco, CA 94164-0047



The Apple Store:
Where Columns Go to Die

I am a man of poor judgment and lack of foresight. As I stand here lamenting the crash of my hard drive, I lament even more my decision to come to abuse the free Internet and software use that the Apple Store offers customers. Mind you, I can be found at this store a lot; it's the only place in the part of town my jobs are located in where I can check my e-mail and look at hot n00d p0rn 4 fr33. Most of the time I never spend more than about 15 minutes in here, and so I never get to witness the horrible Byzantine machination that is life at the Apple Store, where every day thousands upon millions of acts of duplicitous strategizing go down behind the store's hip, service-with-a-smile-and-bad-facial-hair façade. The Apple Store is truly a snake pit of Machiavellian political maneuvering. I tremble in fear of the thought of one of these shades draped in polo and khaki even grazing my arms, for surely it will turn my body into jagged anthracite—it will be thrown into the river Acheron where Charon will callously watch my pitiful body flail and die 'neath the gently lapping waves of the river of woe.

Why did I come here?

"Hi, Golnar? It's Mantooth."

"Hi, Mantooth."

"Yeah, I was just calling to let you know I might be a little late sending in my column this month. My computer is acting up, so I'm gonna go to the Apple Store and finish it up."

And now that I'm here, I don't even remember what I had originally written for this month. My mind has been wiped clean, like these sterile white countertops. This whitewashed shit hole (also snake pit...think of the poo as snakes…poisonous snakes) looks like a lab from the movie *Total Recall*. They're prying open my brain and filling it with delusions of getting my ass to Mars.

Speaking of *Total Recall,* there's a scene in that movie that I hold directly responsible for my general mental condition (very stupid). It's the scene where the Martian woman opens up her blouse, revealing not one, not two, but three breasts. My dad

called me into the living room when he was watching it...I had just turned 11 or 12 and I guess he decided it was time...ya know...for me to see what breasts look like. 'Cause three boobs would totally drive the point home or something. Little did he know that I had already found his porno stash. In the bathroom. In the other bathroom. In the basement. In the attic. In the garage. In the living room. In the kitchen. Anyway, I walk into the room and see that he has this scene on pause.

"Check this out," he said.

"Ha, ha! Well, yeah, that's something, all right."

"Yup."

"I wonder how much her bras cost."

"They don't even have air on Mars. I doubt they have bras. Must be pretty great."

"I've, uh, gotta go..."

Needless to say, I was "utterly" horrified in a lot of ways. I remember that for some time afterwards, I was convinced that there were women walking around with three breasts. At that age, I had no clue what the hell I would do if I found myself in a situation with two of them. But three? How could I possibly handle three at once? The logistics were too much for my adolescent brain to handle, shoving me directly into manhood and breaking me at the same time. Hence the shattered shell of a man I am today.

But back to the Apple Store. These motherfuckers keep coming up to me and asking me if I "needed any help." Yeah, I need some goddamn help. Look at me, asshole. I'm breaking out in a cold sweat. I'm itchy all over. I've got hair where there was no hair before. It's like I'm going through puberty all over again, but these soft lights and greasy men with goatees are roadblocks to boner certainty.

"Oh, you know, I'm just checking my e-mail."

"You must have a lot of email." Keep in mind I've been here now for about 45 minutes.

"Yeah, got a lot of fans that need advice."

"Fans?"

"Yeah, I'm a famous columnist. Maybe you've heard of me? Mantooth."

"Uh, no…no. I haven't."

"Oh, that's OK. I don't mind. Really, I'm glad when someone doesn't know who I am, because it just means I don't have to autograph their bra or jock strap."

"I've, uh, gotta go…"

Further adding to the total brutality of this place is the music. Retail has always made me uncomfortable, and part of the reason is the music. If you remember, I work at The Gap (a block away), and so I'm constantly bombarded with the most vicious and soul-crushing music ever written. Bands like Iron Lung, Hellnation, and Brody's Militia should really spend some more time in places like The Gap or the Apple Store listening to how to really destroy the music listener. Take a few hints from a little band called FOUNTAINS OF WAYNE, with their retail hit "Baby, I've Changed." It's the most brutal song ever written. Here are the lyrics (particularly brutal lyrics italicized): "She used to love me / She don't love me no more / I stepped over the line / Too many times / And she stepped out the door / Well baby I've changed / Won't you come back home? / 'Cause I've changed my wicked ways / And I'll never throw your mail away / And I won't tell you that your hair looks grey / *And I'll let you listen to Sugar Ray* / And I'll say I love you every day / 'Cause it's true / Baby I do / Now I hope and I pray / I can turn this mess around / And I search for a way / To convince you to stay / And not just skip town / 'Cause baby I've changed / Won't you come back home? / 'Cause I've changed my wicked ways / And I'll put away my socks and shoes / If the lights go out I'll change the fuse / *And I'll let you listen to the blues / And I'll say I love you* / Just because it's true / Baby I do Baby I do Baby I do."

And you know what? I didn't even have to look those lyrics up on-line, because this song has played five times since I've been here. I can't wait until their new album on Southern Lord comes out.

ENDNOTES:

Reach me at the Apple Store at: gregory.mantooth@gmail.com

I'm going to go drink myself to death.

"Illegal Y Que" by Los Crudos aka "Illegal, so what?" and translated from the Spanish...

"We come here looking for a better life to escape from the suffering and pain/but we find what we thought we left behind and all you say is that we're robbing your jobs and your neighborhoods/All we look for is a place to live. Why do you complain when we're the ones who take the jobs you don't want/Just shut your mouth while we try to survive/We didn't come here to start any trouble or to disrespect anybody, but we don't like to be treated like we have an illness."

Before I get to the real content of this column, how the *hell* did I miss out on Los Crudos for so long? I have the discography CD on at the moment and could kick myself that I didn't really start listening to them until around 1997 and only got to see them one time. They were easily one of the best bands of the 90s, and I'd say that even if their vocalist wasn't the distribution coordinator for *MRR* (hi Martin!).

Anyway, there's been a lot of talk and attention paid lately to so-called "illegal aliens" or "undocumented immigrants." I make a point of using the latter term because, #1, I don't think any human being is illegal or an alien, unless they come from someplace other than Earth. And, second, because I won't use the terminology of the bigots, who often shorten it to "illegals." If it pisses them off, that's a bonus. This won't be any long-winded dissertation about the pros and cons of so-called illegal immigration but how it sets off alarm signals of racism and classism when reading and hearing about it, both in my own area and other parts of the US.

There's the Minuteman Project, the armed civilian patrols along southwest border with that odor of ugly nativism. In Virginia, illegal immigration is a contentious issue in the gubernatorial election. The Republican candidate, Jerry Kilgore, want to cut off all benefits, including in-state college tuition, while the Democrat, Tim Kaine, wants the issue addressed on a federal level, according to an Associated Press report. That same report quotes Beatriz Ambermann, founder of the Hispanic Community Dialogue Association, as saying, "Immigrants are here wanting to do the jobs that Americans need done... if we don't have people picking the corn, tomatoes, the things we put on our plates...who's gonna do it?" Same point as made in the Crudos song. And, the thing is, up until now, it hasn't been that big an issue but now people are apparently attempting to make political capital with it. Playing to people's prejudices. *They're stealing our jobs*. Uh, not exactly...

In Massachusetts, we have a piece-of-work Lt. Governor named Kerry Healey, who expressed the same idea—don't allow in-state tuition rates for the children of undocumented immigrants. As reported in the *Boston Globe*, while appearing on a Boston radio talk show, Healey suggested these kids go to private schools instead... pay their own way which, of course, in

unrealistic but exactly what you'd expect from an out-of-touch Republipuke who lives in one of the wealthiest communities on Boston's suburban North Shore. Healey is a likely gubernatorial candidate next year, assuming that the current governor, Mitt Romney chooses not to run (he's aiming for the Presidency in 2008) and obviously trying to appeal to the self-interested, fiscally conservative swing voters in the suburbs. Tom Reilly, the state attorney general who is also a likely gubernatorial candidate, supports the in-state tuition under some circumstances. According to the *Globe* article, those conditions are, "as long as they have lived in Massachusetts for at least three years, have graduated from a Bay State high school, and have signed a sworn affidavit affirming that they are applying for US citizenship."

Healey, by the way (according to the *Globe* piece) also got major shit for insinuating, "that senior citizens are 'overhoused' and taking up residential space better used by growing families." Let's put them on ice-floes, I suppose. And her husband Sean recently cashed in $13 million in stock options. In other words, I don't think she's worried about where her next meal is coming from or how to pay for a kids' education. Typical wealthy, heartless Republican. I'm through wasting ink talking about her... for now...

It even hits closer to home. I have one neighbor, George, who I mentioned in this space before, almost a year ago. He's the kind of guy I can borrow a ladder from, if I need it, or get a lift somewhere if my car is being repaired. He's friendly and helpful—a nice guy, for the most part. But dig a bit and the prejudices are revealed. I sometimes take part in the conversations with him and a few other neighbors at the end of one driveway or another at our end of the street. George sometimes brings up the "illegals" coming into the country along the border, as he saw on Lou Dobbs' show on CNN or the ones who were discovered here in Peabody, where I live, a few months back. I looked up an article on the *Boston Globe* archives and it said that the immigrants paid money to be smuggled illegally into the country by two brothers and put to work in their Peabody market to pay off their so-called smuggling fees. Sounds like slave labor, to be honest. Anyway, George was outraged about this—not so much by the exploitation but more about the fact they were here illegally. At least that was my perception. I don't want to say he's a dyed-in-the-wool racist but he does seem to talk about the issue quite a bit. It's a complex issue. I'm not an expert but some people's reactions tell a lot, sometimes. I'll give George some credit, though—he says he's an independent who leans Republican but even he's disgusted at the war in Iraq and Bush's transgressions and said he doesn't think he'll be voting that way again anytime soon.

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Speaking of Iraq, I can't let this column pass without mentioning that the toll for US military casualties in that war has passed the millstone (not milestone) of 2000. What a terrible waste. I don't say that to diminish anyone's death but it was so unnecessary. To borrow a quote from the Instigators and twist it around a bit, the blood is on Bush's hands. He's the reason there are 2000 dead in Iraq and countless others wounded or injured, both physically and mentally. To say nothing of how many Iraqis have been killed during the illegal invasion and war started by the US. The right-wing spin-machine is trying to downplay the 2000 deaths by comparing it to past military events. James Carafano with the conservative Heritage Foundations said, "It's still an incredibly low number that doesn't even equal the number of casualties we had on D-Day." Hey, Carafano, why don't you tell that to the families of the soldiers who died in this unnecessary war. This guy also goes on to say the number is "meaningless" and "This president isn't going to change his policy, and Congress isn't going to make him change his policy. This will all be up for debate in 2008, but until then nothing is going to change."

He may be right about that unless the Democrats are able to re-take one or both of the houses in 2006 and impeach the whole fucking lot of them. Or if there are more indictments, which just started with Lewis "Scooter" Libby, over the Valerie Plame affair. Maybe it'll be another Watergate situation...but I'm a cynical guy and there's a chance we'll be stuck with this wretched administration for a few more years.

Getting back to Carafano's comments about D-Day, I'm not an expert on World War II but it was a different situation. Tim Pepin from the University of Alberta (Canada) website The Gateway writes, "Such a comparison neglects the obvious differences between the two conflicts to such a degree that it's made meaningless. The D-Day invasion was an attack on enemies with equal military sophistication, undertaken with a defined and reasonable purpose and initiated in a state of open and agreed-upon warfare." He goes on to state, "Carafano's comparison is also an insult to the families and memories of the dead soldiers. To juxtapose the death of a soldier in one of the great campaigns of World War II and that of one killed unnecessarily in an illegal, backwards and hopeless occupation is ludicrous and offensive."

That's how I feel...I first heard the Carafano quotes on a talk show and it sickened me. How long will this madness go on? And what waits for the surviving troops when they return? Will the government still care for them or cast them aside with cutbacks to veterans' services? Given the economic conservatism and general heartlessness of the current administration, I don't hold out a lot of hope.

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Let's move on the music reviews... some good shit this month!

ASS-END OFFEND – *Unchecked Aggression* (Poisoned Candy/Wantage, 7" EP)

Ass-End Offend has just split up, with some members planning a move to Portland, but they leave behind a strong five-song EP to wrap things up. Aggressive hardcore with a mainly fast tempo but not really an old-school throwback. An early Born Against influence, if I wanted to make a comparison. Some complex, dynamic instrumentation but without being masturbatory or pretentious. Blistering songs and blistering sentiments—"Your American Dream Is Our Nightmare" kind of sums it up and "Get Over It Already" is a to-the-point commentary about homophobia. Their *Character Assassins* album, which came out earlier this year, wasn't bad but this sounds much more focused. (www.poisonedcandy.com)

BLINDS – *Busy With Business* (No Way, cassette demo)

Teenagers from...not Mars but Sweden and with a cassette-only release on Richmond's No Way label. Smokin' garage/punk/hardcore ala Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Dean Dirg, etc. A clean guitar sound, raspy vocals, and ass-kickin' tunes. "Do You Wanna Slide" cracks the three-minute mark and pays homage to the pick slide with plenty of string scraping provided for your listening pleasure. I loved it so much, I had to make MP3s for my player (shhh... don't tell 'em). Full-length in early '06... (13 S. Blvd. #3, Richmond, VA, 23220, www.deepfrybonanza.com/nowayrecords)

DEAN DIRG – *26 Kicks To Make The Whole World Pay* (Dead Beat, CD)

Two full albums, 26 songs and it doesn't even break the 30-minute mark. It leaves

my head in a spin—a fucking wonderful spin. Stripped-down punk with a clean guitar sound and mixing in garage and hardcore as well. Dean Dirg, who comes from Germany, did a split with Henry Fiat's Open Sore and it's from the same muse. Wham-bam songs that don't give you an opportunity to get comfortable. "Do It Right" is a change of pace, slowing things down and it has a badass catchiness. Today Germany, tomorrow the world. It's great that these recordings are being given a wider airing 'cause they've been tough to come by until now. (PO Box 283, LA, CA 90078, www.dead-beat-records.com)

F-MINUS – *Won't Bleed Me/Failed Society* (Black Noise, CD)

The first two F-Minus EPs from '98, along with two unreleased songs, which are covers of Agnostic Front's "Victim In Pain" and Negative Approach's "Negative Approach" (they also cover "Can't Tell No One" very well). Shredding hardcore punk with an early 80s rawness and pure, undiluted anger, with vocals traded off among Brad, Jen, and original guitarist Sarah. They also pay tribute to early LA punk with a cover of Black Randy's "Trouble At The Cup." I remember hearing "Failed Society" and it hit me like a slap in the face—this is what hardcore *used* to fucking sound like and F-Minus were in there at the start of the back-to-basics revival. Bare-bones packaging but the music is also bare-bones and cuts deep and to the quick. (PO Box 419092, SF, CA 94141, www.alternativetentacles.com)

GOVERNMENT WARNING – *No Way Out* EP (No Way, 7" EP)

Two people from Direct Control are also in this band—Brandon on guitar and Eric on bass and, since the 7", Brandon has moved behind the drum-kit. Throttling old-school hardcore played loud and fast and with lyrics that deal with life's frustrations—"Railroaded" tells the story of having to throw on the dress-up clothes and defend yourself in court. "Self-Destruct" is about the ol' daily grind. Timeless themes, a timeless style. If you like Direct Control, chances are this will grab 'ya as well. If you don't like Direct Control, what's wrong with ya? If you haven't heard them yet, you really need to! (13 S. Blvd. #3, Richmond, VA, 23220, www.deepfrybonanza.com/nowayrecords)

I ATTACK – *American Dream* (Criminal IQ, 7" EP)

I Attack had a strong LP a couple years back that was recommended to me by someone with a distro box at a show—damn if I can remember who it was, but thank you. This 7" is a kick-ass follow-up. Full-throttle hardcore punk with tuneful bits. The title track harkens back to Articles of Faith a bit, who also had a song about so-called American dreams; Rob makes it loud and clear he pledges "allegiance to no flags," and goes on to dump on both "right wing fascist fucks" to "liberal leftist scumbag hippies," but I get the feeling they're more on the progressive side of the fence, they just don't want to align themselves with anyone, stating "one nation, for the punks, to raise the torch of individuality." I'm a liberal leftist but *also* believe in the individual. Anyway, solid songs and finishing with an Impulse Manslaughter cover, providing some Chicago hardcore history. (3540 N. Southport, Chicago, IL 60657, www.criminaliq.com)

LAST PRIEST – *We All Failed* (Old Guard, 7" EP)

A squeal of feedback, a bash of drums, and angry vocals lead the way into the debut for Last Priest, with two people (Spencer and Matt) from Find Him and Kill Him. Battering-ram hardcore with howling vocals and a mid-to-fast crunch and a whiff of Bl'ast/Black Flag, though not derivative of those bands. Dark and decaying sounds. (PO Box 7043, Van Nuys, CA 91409, www.oldguardrecords.com)

LIFE CRISIS – *Churchstate* (Deep Six, 7" EP)

Second ripper in a row for Life Crisis. Shaking off the obvious Poison Idea similarities a bit, but maintaining the loud/hard/fast sound. Not kids, either—let's hear it for guys (and women) sticking to their guns and blasting out the noise as they get older. Anyway, as America descends further in the clutches of theocratic rule, "Churchstate" is there as a reminder about how wrong that is. "Shut Down" is another type of reminder, the age-old idiots-ruining-venues cautionary tale. No caution or anything wrong with the sounds on this EP. (PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510, www..deepsixrecords.com)

REGULATIONS – *Electric Guitar* (Havoc, LP)

Half-new/half-old album released for Swedish band Regulations' US tour. Side one has seven new songs—not quite as shit-hot as their self-titled LP but still plenty fine. A tandem of catchy punk with early 80s West Coast and garage punk influences. "I Can't Do Whatever I Want" and "Disease" have some DKs-ish surf guitar to go with the gritty punk. On the flip, it's their first two 7" EPs (and the first EP was actually originally a demo), which are rougher and brasher-sounding. The flail of "Destroy" remains one of their best songs. "We're Blank" cops a few riffs from the Circle Jerks' "Live Fast Die Young." If you missed out on the original vinyl, here's a way to catch up. Even with the on-the-sleeve influences, there's an enthusiasm and freshness in the playing that really makes this band stick out. (PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.havocrex.com)

RITES – *Death Of The Party* (Gloom, 7" EP)

Another seven songs from the Rites, including a cover of the Zero Boys' "High Times." No time to catch your breath and mixing up fast thrashers with slower ones, each song fading into the next. The lyric sheet reads like a ransom note but, scanning it, I see such phrases as "I want blood," "I'm just leading this life with nothing to show for it" and "I'm freaking out." Hardcore fucking punk delivered with all the animosity they can muster. (Nate Wilson, PO Box 14253, Albany, NY 12212, www.gloomrecords.com)

SOCIAL CIRCKLE – (cassette demo)

Strong debut by this Boston band—definitely getting inspiration from late 70s punk, early 80s hardcore, and a little garage rock. Social Circkle includes people who used to be in Sleeper Cell, Refuseniks, and the Epidemic (Christian, making the transition from bass-player to vocalist) though it's not like any of those bands. An eight-song tape with short, energetic songs punctuated by Christian's expressive/snotty vocals and varying tempos. There's definitely a move towards this back-to-basics sound—there's no denying it—but Social Circkle plays it well. (PO Box 1462, Boston, MA 02117, msmith7904@yahoo.com)

TROPIEZO / OUTRAGED – split (Punx Before Profits 7" EP)

Both bands on this split tear it up, but in slightly different ways. Tropiezo, the veteran band from Puerto Rico, have a fast, tightly-delivered hardcore style with hints of melody and catchiness. Outraged, from California, are also Latino, with two songs in Spanish and two in English, and add some rawness to the speed. Blaze city. Nice hand-screened cover, too. (www.punksbeforeprofits.com)

Al Quint, PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903, email: suburbanvoice@earthlink.net
Sonic Overload radio: http://sonicoverload.moocowrecords.com (no "www" in there)

Charley, Frances, Ivan, Jeanne, Dennis, Katrina, Rita. Hurricane Wilma would be the eighth storm to affect Florida in 14 months. The two busiest hurricane seasons I've been through in my three and a half decades of living as a Floridian.

Though I'm a hurricane nerd, (I love tracking, predicting their paths and strengths, and get pretty excited to witness their fury—they put on a great show!) I was hurricane-weary this time around and my guard was down. All I did to prepare was to get the three of us out of the house and stay out as long as we could. We'd already been cooped up for two days, not due to bad weather, but due to the anxiety surrounding us. School, work, and every event or activity we'd planned on was cancelled and the only hurricane news was the non-news covering what hurricane supplies were being sold at frenzied rates at Home Depot and Wal-Mart. Even my kid yelled at the reporters she saw on the TV, "Stupid, plywood shopping isn't news!" Obviously, my sentiments exactly.

Hurricane Wilma was taking her sweet-assed time, having decreased her forward motion from a 7 mph turtle crawl to a 3 mph molasses drip. She'd been hanging onto the tip of the Yucatan Peninsula at Cozumel and Cancun for days. She was torturing folks there with her constant, battering 100+ mph winds far worse than she was us by taking days to show up, but still, waiting for her was making us stir crazy.

My grandmother had left her car at my house for safe keeping while she and her 95-year-old husband escaped on a ten-day Caribbean cruise. (Yes, I know, escaping to the Caribbean on a city-sized ship while record-breaking Wilma, Alpha and Beta were out there swirling around is a tad ridiculous, and I did try to tell them so, to go to California or New Mexico instead, but she insisted on keeping their cruise plans.) Since her car has a CD player and A/C, and our car has neither, we decided to "play pretend we have a rental" and take hers on our own escape from pending cabin fever.

I called every thrift store to find out if any were open and got lucky that the only one open for one more hour was my favorite one. Before we were even out of the driveway, Daddy 'Nesto had replaced my grandma's Christian Science bible lesson CD with one of our own, Kylesa, and turned it up loud! My wild ass five-and-a-half-year-old was literally screaming and bouncing out of her seatbelt, pumping her "rock and roll" devil-horn-fingered fists up towards us in the front seats. I had to pull over down the block for a safer game of "in-the-car family pit time" so I could join her and 'Nesto in their playful pushing each other around. Doing so, I thought to myself that this is definitely *not* what Kylesa had in mind while writing and recording the songs for their first CD.

After an hour of excellent thrift scores, we weren't ready to go home. Instead, we went to the only other open store, Walgreen's. There we bumped into another family we knew from E-J's soccer team. They too were escaping the upcoming lockdown behind shuttered windows. Daddy 'Nesto tried on just about every Halloween costume and chased screaming E-J and Juan down the aisles. I played a toy sax to make little Sophia dance. It was time to go when E-J broke something and we didn't want to stick around long enough to have to pay for it.

We took in the sights of the usual Young Circle characters, ourselves among them, at the bus stop hub for a while before heading for the beach. Unlike during other Hurricane Warning times, we were allowed beach access this time. We gobbled pizza, played on the playground pirate ship and licked the flying drips off ice cream cones as the winds had suddenly picked up from a mild breeze to a steady 25 mph. Maybe Wilma was finally staring to move!

Driving home, we started to wonder if others knew something we didn't. We weren't fazed or worried the slightest, but things around us were looking lifeless except for the last-minute plywood protection being banged into place onto windows. We shrugged it off and quickly decided we'd be OK only relying on the five gallons of water, candles and battery-powered radio we already had on hand. After all, the beach had still been open and the only evacuations ordered were for those in mobile homes.

Back at home, the news told us that Wilma was increasing tremendously both in forward movement and in strength and we were now in the direct line of fire. She'd moved a bit south. Oops.

In the midnight dark, as winds were continuing to strengthen, we decided to screw the two shutters we have down and store our outside stuff like chairs, bikes and garden things into E-J's plywood playhouse "shed." It now looked like we'd be bearing the brunt of a category 3 storm.

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The howling winds woke me up at 6 am. We still had power, so I checked the news. Wilma sure was coming and had just made landfall on the southwest coast near Naples as a category 3 after all. Her eye would be over us on the southeast coast at around 9 am and the worst would be over by noon. The power finally went out at 7 am and I went back to bed.

She was loud and her noises ranged from gusts to howls to rumbles to unknown things banging, crashing and thudding. Transformers popping. Blown-in water drips on windowsills from behind battened hatches. I had to force the calm yoga breathing I'd been practicing in preparation for the upcoming birth of my second child onto my increasingly quick, shallow breaths.

Starting to feel pretty unsafe sleeping under an unshuttered window, I moved sleeping E-J to the bunk bed in her room, the safest in the house. I crawled up next to her and lay there paralyzed with both maternal and pregnancy hormone induced anxiety, even though I so wanted to get up and watch the storm. Wilma was an awesome one, ripping over the entire southern tip of the Florida peninsula, not weakening too much over land due to the warm, vast waters of the Everglades. But the mama in me won out over the thrill seeker in me and I knew E-J would sleep longer if I were there next to her. I didn't want her to wake up scared.

At one point, around 8 am and in the thick of things, E-J tossed and turned and opened her eyes to see me awake and hanging my head over the bunk bed, peering out the window.

"What are you doing?" she asked,

"Watching the storm," I told her.

"Yeah, that's a storm alright," she offhandedly observed as she fell immediately back into sleep, draping an arm and a leg over me.

Her calm influenced me and I followed suit until we both woke up at 10:30 am.

She was instantly disappointed that we had no electricity. I pulled out the same speech I gave her when Katrina knocked the lights out, "There are lots of people all over the world who live without electricity every day, " and "You can pretend you're a kid in the old days and play marbles, read

books, dance around and play board games."

She quickly blew me off with, "Yeah, but those kids could play outside and I can't when there's a hurricane," but then just as quickly headed to the Hello Kitty battery powered boom box and pushed play on the current family favorite, *Verschwende Deine Jugend 1977-1983* German punk and new wave CD, and a dance party threesome commenced.

When that was done she came up with her own idea, "Can we go to a shelter where there's homeless people who never have electricity and I can cook them some eggs since I only don't have electricity for a little while?" I promised her yes, that we'd be doing something like that.

Daddy 'Nesto suggested we keep busy until then by making a fake weatherman in the hurricane news report with me as the camerawoman and him in a raincoat as the weatherman. When E-J wanted to join us, we decided to be responsible parents instead and stay out of the 100+ mph winds. She asked, "If you didn't have a kid would you go outside?"

We both replied truthfully, "Yeah, probably."

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Around 12:30, the worst was past us and we ventured out. The air was surprisingly cool and crisp, E-J observed, "like Montana on a summer night."

All the other neighbors were out gawking about like we were, some walking sketched out dogs, others offering help to get branches off cars. The street, from both directions, looked impassable at first due to fallen trees, but with a little cooperative muscle, my neighborhood was able to get back on its resilient car-culture feet, so to speak, and get out there to consume some gas.

No work or school to go to today, no shopping stores open, I can only imagine they're going to drive around to gawk at other fallen trees on other streets, with hopes to see a smashed car or a living room under a tree or two, perhaps some snapped apart mobile homes. Or maybe they were heading to the bars. Power or no power, those are always open immediately post-hurricane. Some never bothered to close.

The sound of a generator filled the air like a lawnmower left on in the idle position. Mustn't do without power for a few hours or days. Maybe their brother was on life support and they really needed that gas-guzzling generator going just six hours after the electricity went out. We wondered how many TV shows per gallon they were getting.

Instead of relying on a generator to keep our ice cream frozen, we gladly forced a half-gallon down our three throats. A perfect hurricane breakfast!

We then ventured out on foot and off our block to see lots more than peeled-off tar paper roofs, blown-away shingles, and streets strewn with limbs. In the two-block area of our downtown alone, hurricane shutters had been ripped off the windows they were supposed to protect, the metal they were made of sheared in half like tin foil, and the windows behind them shattered. Not a single streetlight remained standing. Every traffic light lay smashed on the ground. (E-J asked why they looked so big on the ground but so small hanging up in the air, a spontaneous lesson in relative perspective.) Entire stucco facades had been ripped off buildings, but where we were, there was surprisingly little structural damage.

Daddy 'Nesto found a plastic baseball bat and he and E-J had a grand time smashing already smashed things. The huge round plastic street light bulb covers made excellent space alien helmets and colossally huge soccer balls.

It's also worth noting that in the nearly three years I've lived in Hollywood, I've hardly seen any punks. Now, all of a sudden, on these post-hurricane streets, there they were. I didn't get the time of day with my six-month preggo self popping out of a Joan Jett shirt, but 'Nesto sure did in his "The Day the Country Died" Subhumans shirt. I didn't care; I was just glad to see them.

There wasn't much to do after the sun went down and we had exhausted candle-lit rounds of Candy Land, Chutes and Ladders, Go Fish, and Memory, so we went to bed early…but not until after a brief stroll down our pitch black street where, for the first time ever in South Florida, we were able to take long gazes up at a beautifully starry sky.

Curses to you generator man, marring the blackout.

The day (and weeks) after.

It's the most beautiful clear blue sky, cool temperature day of the year. That, and the fact there was no flooding, made Wilma's aftermath actually enjoyable—an obviously much, much different scenario than Katrina's aftermath in the Southern Gulf States, and New Orleans specifically.

To find out what happened outside of our little downtown bubble, I got my hands on the local newspaper. I don't remember the last time I relied on one as my one and only source of information, but there I learned that the tri-county area (Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach) that makes up the tangled, intertwined, sprawling mess of concrete and asphalt known as South Florida was left with a 98% power outage to its 3.2 million residents, including hospitals, the Port Everglades (where the area's gas supply was sitting unable to be pumped), airports, you name it, and service wasn't expected to be fully restored for a month. (We'd find out later that the 2% who never lost power lived in an area 30 miles west of us called Weston that has its power lines underground.)

Airports, schools, public transportation, and all government operations were suspended until further notice. FEMA and the Red Cross would be handing out ice, water and ready-to-eat meals at 17 locations in our county. Our entire county was on a boil-water order and several cities within the county had no water at all due to large trees that had their roots wrapped around water mains being uprooted, snapping the pipes. There was little or no landline or cell phone service.

Wilma, a solid category 2 with category 3 gusts of up to 123 mph, had sufficiently kicked South Florida's ass. Not a knocked-down ass kicking, but definitely a loser left standing with a few teeth missing, scrapes, bruises, broken bones, a little internal bleeding and some tufts of hair missing.

We embraced the opportunity to have a break from suffocating routines and the strangulating South Florida daily pace of life. We loved it for days and days while things were slowly but surely getting back to "normal". We loved the bike rides to the beach and to the neighborhood park with the neighborhood kids. We loved that friends were dropping by to share food, hang out, and have sleepovers. We loved seeing kids actually out playing in the streets and neighbors getting together, hanging out and grilling outside.

I had a blast with my friends, dumpstering cases and cases of still frozen food from the Burger King across the street from where I work—in total, four Suzuki Sidekick-loads to the brim—and passing it out to lots of stoked people across from two different FEMA ice and water distribution centers. We didn't cook eggs at a shelter like E-J had thought we should, but I felt useful when I was able to give rides to newly homeless pregnant women to the grocery store when it finally reopened so they could get something besides the Pringles, Oreos, and BBQ beef in a can that

FEMA was passing off as ready-to-eat meals.

Except for the 600-1000 people who have been made homeless as a result of Wilma, and the disabled and elderly who did not have access to ice, water or food for three or four days, (and I'm positive there are other misfortunes and hardships I'm not aware of) I am utterly confused by the millions of people who are crying out to get things back to normal as quickly as possible, that they are going absolutely fucking nuts without their routines.

How about next time we as a community focus on getting help to where help is really needed, like organizing carpools for those who needed to get to a kidney dialysis machine, instead of whining about, and fist-fighting in, hours-long lines at gas stations so we could get more gas for our personal home-use generators?

How about the bumbling state meet in an emergency legislative session to make a plan to recommend to the elderly high-rise community employees and leaders to meet its residents' post-hurricane needs instead of meeting to discuss a new mandatory generator at gas stations law like it did this time?

How about next time the newspapers report more about the shelters and their needs, the newly homeless, the devastated rural farming communities in Belle Glade and Pahokee and give us some stories about some individual, community, and grass-roots autonomous efforts towards cooperative relief instead of giving us headlines that scream "GASOLINE GRIDLOCK"?

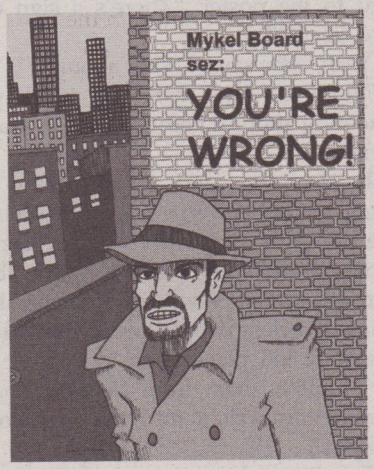
This time, the sensationalist media coverage focused on dependence on FEMA, even though time and time again FEMA has been faulty with their relief efforts due to their own bureaucrappic red tape.

After six days our power was restored. That same morning, 'Nesto woke from a dream wherein he had snuck all over town stealing all the light bulbs and gluing switches to their off position so that no one would know when the power was restored. After two weeks, the lines at gas stations are convenient for the masses again, but now lines at laundromats are long. There are plenty still without power, including the entire block across the street form us. Schools and public transportation will resume tomorrow. My work still has no power, but I'll resume there tomorrow anyway, by candlelight.

And while South Florida plugs away at restoring itself to business as usual, it will be holding its breath for another month until hurricane season ends.

Oh yeah, my grandma's cruise had to switch courses to dodge Hurricane Beta around Costa Rica. They went to Jamaica instead.

Punkparents, get in touch: yardwideyarns @hotmail.com or PO Box 220331, Hollywood, FL 33022.



Perhaps there exists no one, however virtuous he may be, who may not be led one day by the complexity of his circumstances to live on familiar terms with the vice he condemns most expressly.

—Marcel Proust

In 1973, Professor Milgram wore a white laboratory coat and surrounded himself with scientific-looking equipment. A student volunteer became "the teacher." It was "the teacher's" task to give steadily rising degrees of electric shocks to "a learner." This "learner" was supposedly strapped to a chair in a nearby room in front of a task to be "learned." "The teacher's" job was to condition "the learner" with a shock every time he made an error. The "teacher" couldn't see the "learner."

Unknown to "the teacher," "the learner" was an assistant of Milgram's. He did not receive a shock. He merely acted the part—complete with cries, shouts, and pleas for mercy all coming from the next room.

"The teacher" sat in front of a sophisticated-looking "electric shock-inducing" switchboard. It had a keyboard with marked buttons ranging from "slight shock" to "danger—severe shock." Before the teachers administered shocks, Dr. Milgram gave each a tiny, genuine shock. That way they could understand what sorts of pain the learner would be receiving—but in ever-increasing doses.

The learner made many mistakes requiring the teacher to give numerous and more severe shocks. At one end of the experiment, there was a suffering victim calling for the experiment to stop. At the other end there was the authority figure instructing the teacher to continue.

The authority figure would first say "in the interests of science continue." Then "please continue." Then, "the experiment requires that you continue." Then, "it is absolutely essential that you go on." Finally, "you have no choice but to go on."

This proceeded until the teacher pressed the button for "fatal shocks." After that, there were no further cries from the learner.

"The teacher" was the real subject of the experiment. The object was to discover how far a normal male would go in carrying out orders by an authority. This included orders injuring or killing another human being.

Milgram repeated this experiment many times. He found that ordinary young men would invariably obey orders to torture and murder a complete stranger— someone they never even saw.

Milgram writes, "even with this low degree of expected zeal or commitment and without prior conditioning, not one participant refused to go on the moment he knew he was beginning to cause discomfort to another human being. Two-thirds of the subjects obeyed the experimenter to the last and severest shocks."

His conclusion: "This is, perhaps, the most fundamental lesson of our study: ordinary people, simply doing their jobs, and without any particular hostility on their part, can become agents in a terrible destructive process. Moreover, even when the destructive effects of their work becomes patently clear, and they are asked to carry out actions incompatible with fundamental standards of morality, relatively few people have the resources needed to resist authority. A variety of inhibitions against disobeying authority come into play and successfully keep the person in his place."

Flash ahead thirty years. At first, it looks like nothing has changed. The soldier-scapegoats in the torture of Iraqis are the most obvious example that come off the top of my thin-haired head.

I sit on the stoop of a building on St. Marks Place. I'm tired, slightly soused, and want to take a breather. I just sit, watching the Japanese tourists telling each other how exotic this place is. From behind me comes a voice—loud and jockish.

"Hey," it says, "can't you read?"

"No," I say. "I don't have a book."

He doesn't get it.

"Look here," he says.

I turn and look at what he's pointing to. It's a piece of paper, printed by computer, in Microsoft Word, in large type: NO SITTING!

"Sorry," I say. "I didn't see the sign."

I get up and stagger home. It's only an hour later, while I'm letting loose the brown squirts, that I get pissed off.

"I'm just like one of them!" I think. "I just listened to that guy on the steps. Not because he said anything. But because it was *written*. Because there was a *sign*. What the fuck is a sign?"

Suddenly I'm depressed. I'm one of those authoritarian folks. I *hate* authority, and here I am following it, just because it's written.

A few turds later, my depression turns to inspiration.

"Maybe our way out of authoritarianism is overkill. Just as no one pays attention to commercials any more...because they're everywhere. Maybe authority will die because it's everywhere. I obeyed that sign without thinking, but how many written instructions do I reject? Every day signs tell us to do so much. We *can't* obey everything. Maybe it's a kind of automatic rebellion."

But the more I think about it, the more I have my doubts. I think about Iraq...and my own knee-jerk response.

I wonder what happened to the debriefed members of the Milgram experiment. They learned how blindly obedient they were. I bet they'll forever be more distrustful of authority.

Maybe I have to provide my own debriefing. Maybe I have to train myself to disobey authority by showing how foolish—and evil—it is to obey. Starting tomorrow, for 24 hours I will do what I'm "told."

Tomorrow: I leave my apartment on Bleecker Street. On the way to the subway, I walk past a bunch of newspaper boxes. White, red, blue, they're filled with free newspapers. On the front of each box is a Plexiglas door and a handle. Etched into the Plexiglas is a sign that says: TAKE ONE.

I open each door and TAKE ONE. Soon my arms are filled with *The Computer Shopper, NY Employment Weekly, Tennis News, L-Magazine, and Parents Weekly*, as well as the local free dailies. The bundle is as thick as two phonebooks.

I go down the stairs into the subway station. Once in the subway itself, I sit with the stack of newspapers on my lap. Next to me, a chubby white woman, whose too short shorts bind into her thighs, reads the front page of *AmToday* in my lap.

Across from me is a large sign. On the sign is a picture of an empty subway car with a big black bag under the seat. Under the picture, in 288 point type: IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!

I turn to the lady sitting next to me and point to the poster. "There's a sign over there. See it?"

"Yeah," she says. "What about it?"

"Nothing," I tell her. "I'm just saying something about it because I see it. Want a newspaper?"

She declines... and a lucky thing too. When I get out of the subway, I pass a large wire bin with a sign from Grand Central Partnership. [Note: I don't know about your city. But in New York, "partnership" means homeless people forced to work for a flea infested place to sleep because the city prohibits them from sleeping on the streets...or fines them for lying down in the subways.]

This partnership tells me to PUT TRASH HERE. Ok, I'm ready. I dump my armload of papers into the can. And walk on. Uh oh. There's another can, also telling me to PUT TRASH HERE. Shit!

I go back to the first can and pull out most of the papers. Then, can by can, I throw a few pages away so I can follow the written orders.

Turning the corner in Grand Central, I see a huge banner over the entrance to the exhibition hall. VISIT THE SUPREME COURT EXHIBIT IN VANDERBUILT HALL.

Dammit! I'm running late for school, but an order is an order. I turn the corner and walk smack into one of those saw horses. When I start to climb over it, I hear a female voice behind me.

"Hey! Whadaya think you're doin'?"

I look back and see a short Oriental policewoman.

"There's a sign out there that told me to visit this exhibit. So that's what I'm trying to do."

"It's not open yet," she says. "It doesn't open until 9:30."

"But the sign says VISIT!" I protest. "Aren't I supposed to follow what the signs say?"

The cop looks skywards as if saying, *"Another nut. Is this what I get paid for?"*

"The exhibit opens at 9:30," she says. "You'll wait until then. Okay?"

In my thirst to obey signs, I let nothing stand in my way. I throw down my remaining papers, pick up the wooden barrier and slam it into the cop's belly. Then I trudge ahead to the exhibit.

No I don't.

"I'm sorry officer," I say, sheepish as a Jew in a cattlecar. "I'll come back."

To official head-shaking and tsk tsking, I head for the escalator in the back of the building—a relatively cop-free area.

At the escalator, there is a sign on the space that separates one escalator from the other. [Note: There must be a technical word for this space. When I put "escalator separation space" into Google, however, I only get a bunch of building codes, no special word.]

HOLD HANDRAIL. ATTEND CHILDREN. Says the sign.

If I get on the escalator and there are no children, I won't be able to do both. Holding the handrail will force me to go to the top. It will also keep me in one place so I can't attend any children.

I'm not exactly sure what "attend" means. But I figure it's something like "watch so they don't slide down the escalator separation space and make sure they don't do other nasty things."

Ah, there are some people. They look like tourists. A plump blonde, with her husband. He's tall, skinny with glasses. He wears shorts and loafers. *Not* a New Yorker. And they've got a kid with them! A little girl, about eight years old. Her brown hair is cut about chin length. Her turned up nose and turned down mouth corners make her look like a perfect brat.

They get on the escalator. I get on the step behind them. Holding tightly to the handrail, I place myself behind the little girl. I bend my knees slightly so my legs are right behind the little brat. If this isn't attending, nothing is.

Dad looks back at me. Looking me up and down, hat to boots, he pulls the girl around in front of him. If he punches me, I bet it'll cure me of bending to authority.

"Please don't move her," I say to him. "I'm attending her."

The muscles in his arms and face tighten. His wife tugs at his sleeve.

"Please, Sam," she says. "It's okay."

By this time, we're at the top of the escalator. The family turns quickly to enter to Grand Central Deli. I walk out the door on my way to work.

At work, there are lots of little signs about refilling the ice cube trays after you use them. Not pouring water down the cooler drain. Nothing that would make me act in any way different from usual.

After work, I take the subway home and get out at the Houston Street exit. On Houston Street, there is a shelter where

busses start and end their uptown/downtown journeys. I pass it every time I go to the post office to check my PO Box. Today, I notice a sign. It's on the pole just on the east end of the shelter. BUS STOP, it says. NO STANDING ANY TIME.

No standing at a bus stop? What are you supposed to do before the bus comes? Well, if I'm going to follow orders, I can't quit now. I sit down. Right at the curb.

A taxi passes too close. In wetter weather it would have covered me with the remains of a muddy puddle. Now it only scares me into backing up a bit. But I've still got a problem. I need to cross the street to get to the post office. As long as I'm at the bus stop, however, I can't stand.

Leaning back, I push myself up on my arms and legs and crabwalk. I propel myself back, away from the street. Right arm. Right leg. Left arm, left leg. Moving slowly so as not to bump into any one or any thing, I navigate around the L-shaped bus shelter toward the cross walk. Bang! My shoulder hits something.

"What the fuck's wrong with you?" comes a deep voice above me. From the courtesy of the comment, I figure it's a New Yorker.

I tilt my head back to look at him. He's a skinny guy, about 23, with acne so thick you can grate cheese on it.

Balancing on two legs and one arm, I use the other arm to point to the sign.

"Can't you read?" I say. "This is a bus stop. No standing."

"Asshole!" says the zitguy with typical New York conversational wit and aplomb. But he doesn't do anything else. So I still may not be cured.

It doesn't take long before I crabwalk around the shelter to the crosswalk. There, I stand up and wait for the light to tell me to WALK.

Coming home, I check my personal mailbox. I put the key in the mailbox door and take out a bunch of bills and a couple other envelopes. In the elevator up to my apartment, I see an envelope that says WARNING ADULT CONTENT on the front. That isn't really a command. Then, one from Citibank, says PLEASE DO NOT DISCARD on it. I pull that one out. When I get into my apartment I stick it on a bookshelf next to my first edition SHARDS OF GOD. It'll keep.

Another envelope is from *The Franklin Mint*. It offers me "a Medal, plated with 14 carat gold. On one side, a picture of liberty's arm, torch lit. On the other the profile of the 43rd president of the United States, George W. Bush."

Along with an illustration of the offending medal is an order form. SEND A CHECK OR MONEY ORDER FOR $39.95, TODAY!

I'm cured.

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: www.mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) may receive a few extra endnotes. Plus you'll get live "click on" links.]*

Incentives Dept: Maybe it's in the genes, but I can't resist a free offer. Every time I get a magazine subscription coupon that says "first issue free, cancel if not satisfied," I always subscribe and write *cancel* on my first bill.

You can imagine how excited I was when *Health After 50 Newsletter* offered me a free issue and a special bonus. "Yours to keep no matter what you decide," said the ad.

The offer? "A free health calendar, specially prepared to help you keep track of your own health needs." So when I got the first issue of the newsletter I tore through the too-skinny envelope, looking for the health calendar.

What I found was an 8 x 10 piece of paper. On each side were six months. Each month was labeled. March is *National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month*, for example. Within each month, one week is highlighted. The week is also named. In case you didn't know, the week of April 17, 2006 is Oral, Head, and Neck Cancer Awareness Week. July (Eye Injury Prevention Month) and August (National Immunization Awareness Month) have no special weeks. My specially prepared calendar says so.

National Sex Offenders Persecution Month? I continue the story I wrote last week about how sex makes crimes forever unpaid.

New Jersey is now providing a map of registered sex offenders. At www.mapsexoffenders.com you can check where they live. It's easy to pinpoint those houses for a late night raid; cross burning, or simple brick throwing. As long as you don't say "homo" or "nigger," no jury in America would ever convict you of anything.

I Expect They're As Accurate With My Credit Dept: It used to be the mantra of conservatives that private enterprise can do anything better than the government. Of course, when the conservatives get hold of government, that's true. But if you want an example of Private Enterprise try calling for your "free credit report" from the credit collection agency at: 877-322-8228. A machine answers the phone:

Speak, then spell your last name...

"Board, B-O-A-R-D"

I understood BORGE, B... O... R... G... E. Say YES if that's correct...

"NO"

I'm sorry, I didn't get that. Please say YES if that is correct.

"NO!!!"

Ok, we'll try again, please spell your name...

"B-O-A-R-D"

I understood CORBE, C... O... R... B... E. Say YES if that's correct...

"NO!"

I'm sorry, I didn't get that. Please say YES..

Quality of whose Life Dept: NY's soon-to-be reelected mayor has somehow managed to bamboozle the city's Democrats. His smile, non-confrontational style, and tons of money make him a nice sop for the locals— despite his huge contributions to George Bush's coffers.

Now, *The Independent* newspaper reports that three police sergeants from the 75th precinct in Brooklyn testified that their commanding officer presumably with orders from higher up, "had circulated a note mandating that officers issue at least 33 "quality of life" summonses per quarter in order to avoid poor performance reviews."

Quality of life, if you don't know, is a code name for crimes without victims. "Crimes" like panhandling, drinking on the street, and cleaning people's car windows. And people say Bloomberg's not a *real* Republican. Tsk tsk.

Nuclear Reaction Dept: *Sierra Magazine* reports that the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission is working on recycling contaminated materials. The agency is considering selling the dirt to homeowners as compost, the clay to brick makers, and other material to landscapers. When critics argued that maybe this could be hazardous to ordinary people, the agency answered:

"We're not going to react to emotions. People are afraid of radioactivity; they're afraid of anything nuclear. It's just like a built-in emotion. And we're not going to react to that."

Plastic Wrap Tax: Denmark is my favorite country...and they've just added another reason. They've started a "green tax" on product packaging. The more "environmentally unfriendly" the packaging, the higher the taxes. Glass and cardboard—low tax. Polystyrene and aluminum—high tax. Yeah!

Is It Safe To Do It? Department: Samsung has a Korean-only cellphone that does more than bore your neighbor with intimate details of your bodily functions—it measures them. Marketed to women, this

phone counts calories, keeps track of your period, tells you when you're ovulating and when it's (relatively) safe to screw around.

Is It Safe To Do It? Pt. 2: Named in *New York Press* as one of New York's most despicable people, Attorney General Eliot Spitzer continues to prove himself worthy of the title.

Spitzer was notorious during the Guiliani administration. It was his intervention that fought free speech and closed the porno shops in Times Square. This made the area safe for Disney and Starbucks.

In his latest fight against freedom, Spitzer has fined a local hip-hop station a quarter of a million dollars for promoting "Smackfests." These are smacking contests between volunteers—young women usually—in search of prizes and fame.

Not only is Spitzer an opponent of personal freedom. The enforcer is also a hypocrite.

"We are not, nor should we be, the arbiters of good taste and bad taste in the media," says Spitzer.

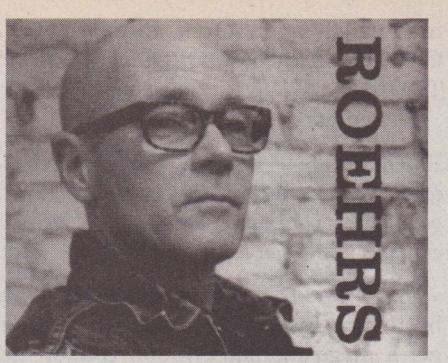
Oh yeah? About this case, he says, "Hot 97 violated good judgment and it violated any sense of decorum and taste."

Just what *are* you arbitrating there, Mr. Spitzer?

No Evidence Dept: These days Christians are pushing for "Intelligent Design" to be taught in science class along side evolution. This despite the fact there hasn't been one article on I.D. published in a scientific journal, or one peer-reviewed experiment. The essence of science is review, test, and counter-test. It makes sense.

On the other hand, humans are pretty dumb. They react in stupid ways. As a matter of fact, a lot of human design is pretty damn poor. Take pain. Please! Don't tell me it's a "warning system." Why not have a doorbell ring? What about pain that can't be stopped? What about cancer, and other horrible diseases? What about bird flu? If they proposed a "stupid design," theory I might buy it and let 'em teach it in science class. The fundies would be their own best proof of the theory.

Whoring for Dollars Dept: If you hate this column, there's more where it came from. I've just published a book of columns called *I, A Me-ist*. If you'd like to look at it, check out the links from my website www.mykelboard.com. I'll be traveling around to support the book, so if you've got any ideas of where I can read, or hold a book signing, or just set up a table at a punk show, let me know at: mykelboard@gmail.com



Trust Me

Fuck yes! The band currently operating under the moniker MAXIMUM RNR has a fucking amazing new CD out for you! The new thrash masterpiece is entitled *Horns Up* and every song on this fucker is brilliant tough as nails punk.

MAXIMUM RNR hails from East Toronto, Ontario, Canada and these motherfuckers come to destroy your world with rock and roll. The vocals are brute-snarl-right-in-your-face from the first note with the guitars snaking through with enough metal strength to keep some old SUICIDAL TENDENCIES fans happy. Some of the lyrics on the MAXIMUM RNR songs are in French? The song "Trust Me" leads off the CD with a fifty-song blast of punk bile! Fucking great!

The next song is "Say What" and this fucker kicks a lot of ass! Fans of the RITES will like MAXIMUM RNR. Read some of the words to "Say What": "Jump up / Jump down / Loaded spring / Gonna write my fortune / I need to feed off the ones that'll pat my back / Take a building by force / Any means to secure my piece / Say what gonna find my function / Throw up / Throw down / Make your will the talk of the town / I need to lead a broken ship that I cannot steer / Got a plan / Gonna stand / Gonna make a fucking change / Keep trying to convince them / hard hearts won't break the fall / Stationary ball."

The next tune is "Speaking Tongues." And this epic rock and roll tune is a must-hear selection! Two minutes and one second of superbly crafted rock. MAXIMUM RNR has something to say! Read "Speaking in Tongues": "Hold your throat / Swallow hard / What great progress so far / Open up wide / Let the demon deep outside / I know that the path is a lonely road / I never understood you / Take a look in the mirror / Motherfucker / Man it's not so pretty / I will try / Communicate the know / Untie / Trance / Mission / Push out / Lure out / Spit out / Fixate generate / Re-arrange the morsels on the plate / This time read me / Like the cover and the spine / I caught the lion / Locked up the cage / And you try to let it loose / Little finger / Turns to bruise / I said it before / I'll say it again / I'm trying to make amends / But I cannot forget / Speaking in tongues / It's easy friend / It's fun / two lips / two lungs / Let your breath be the vessel of the scum."

Amazing! This fucking band can do no wrong! The fourth song is "Turmoil" and reading the words are important to understand what makes MAXIMUM RNR tick. Read "Turmoil": "Frantic / Hectic / Manic / Now tight the vice / No time for being / No you cannot take a rest / It's going pop pop pop / Hooray / All bend the knees / Feed the circuits please / Don't mind the generator's cough / It's going pop pop pop / I tell myself it's not for real / Bending down to pull the plug / it's not for real / Able bodies / Little screws / Fine machinery feeds the noose / Pile the ouchies / Suck the thumb / Shit it out and eat it up / Sugar coated much / Don't mind the limping leg / All cursors point to yes / It's going to leave a mess / The head is feeling numb."

The last two tunes are a thick blast of hardcore punk that will make the hairs stand up on your neck. Read "I Turn My Back": "I turn my back / You sigh / I sigh / You roll your eyes / Maybe we weren't meant to be." And "I Hate the Cold": "Closed door / Set décor / Numb in the comfort that makes you sure everybody says / Come on out / Can't drag the corpses south / I hate the cold / Stuck inside a hole / Locked in far from sin / Burning couches for warmth they bring / Everybody says come and play / Can't stand the light of day / what when the heaters fail / That one take to compromise the sail freezer burn / No big concern / Correction / It's gonna leave a scar."

Fucking amazing! MAXIMUM RNR is one of the most powerful forces playing punk rock right now! Order your copy of *Horns Up* from MAXIMUM RNR, PO Box P62-Z75, King Street, East Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5A 1K2.

Fuck yes! The mighty BONECRUSHER from Southern California came up to San Francisco to play the Rumbler's Car Club annual bash. Noah, Mike, Pat, and company came north to remind us of the power of a live BONECRUSHER set with songs such as "Corporate Nation," "Casualty," and "Tomorrow Is Too Late." BONECRUSHER fucking rocked the club! Read the BONECRUSHER assessment of life in the city of Los Angeles in the song "Badlands":

"Alley cats and sewer rats / All marked up with needle tracks / All in a fit and don't give a shit / When the lights go out / They are all about / Ain't got no home / Push comes to shove / They are all out on their own / This is the Badlands / They take what they can get / This is the Badlands / They leave no regrets / No fair game out in the rain / The creatures will devour / No telling what they would do in their darkest hour / When the lights go out / They are all about / Ain't got no home / Push comes to shove / They are all out on their own."

Fuckin' A! BONECRUSHER has a song called "Can't Stop Us Now," which makes a good anthem for a band that has been on the road for many years and is stronger than ever with the singing and song writing of the current line up! Read "Can't Stop Us Now": "Who's that inside my head / Who's that who wants me dead / It's just a vision / A crash course collision / Been at it way too long / Who the fuck are you to say we're through? / We'll put you right where you belong / It's in our souls / I can't pretend / Ain't going to stop until the end / We'll keep on marching on / Just come along / Let the rest be gone / Don't tell us how / You can't stop us now / Seen the writing on the walls / Behind closed doors / You talk so small / You didn't make it / You can't ever change it / Been at it way too long / Who the hell are you to say were through? / We'll stand up proud / We'll stand up true."

That's some fucking powerful rock 'n' roll! Opening for BONECRUSHER at the Rumbler's Car Club show was NO SOLUTION, also from Southern California. NO SOLUTION delivered a scorching set and the crowd received them enthusiastically. NO SOLUTION has a CD in the works right now and we can expect to hear some solid street rock from these bad men in the near future.

HAMMERLOCK, Northern California's Kings of Country Fried Scum Rock played a strong set that was enhanced by the addition of Bob on pedal steel. HAMMERLOCK is writing new songs and has played a few of them to favorable crowd reception. Look for a new HAMMERLOCK CD in the near future.

Vinyl Addict Records has a limited HAMMERLOCK / ANTiSEEN seven inch available for you right now! Having the infamous ANTiSEEN, Rawest Rulers of the C.O.S., team up with our beloved HAMMERLOCK for a split EP is a good as it gets for Confederacy of Scum fans!

Good music at the Rumblers function was also supplied by STIGMA 13, THE FORGOTTEN, and CHANNEL THREE. Thanks to all the bands involved.

Till next month, see you at the bar!

From Drew in Ballwin, Missouri:

Dear Arwen,

Thanks for the article comparing They Might Be Giants with the Ramones. This is a link I've thought about but never really could verbalize until you did. So be happy.

At the local house where shows happen every once in a while, a band came in from out of town. They were a grind or a crust band, I think—really heavy. Despite the spiked jackets and Profane Existence patches, the neatest thing about them was the TMBG sticker the bassist sported on his bass.

This kind of validates the point for me—there is some sort of odd connection between TMBG and punk.

Originally, I got into punk through skateboarding and TMBG. As far as skating goes, lots of people did that, but the TMBG link is an odd story.

There's a line in the last song on their first LP ("Rhythm Section Want Ad") that goes like:

"If you like Menudo or MDC..."

I hadn't heard of either of those, so I went to check them out at the local record store. I sat there listening to both Menudo and MDC and quickly determined that MDC was far cooler. I was about 12 at the time, I'm 18 now.

The rest is (cliché alert) history.

Thanks, Drew,

The editors gave me the pushing-the-envelope-of-punk look when I turned in that column about They Might Be Giants, and I totally deserved it. Although it's hard for me to believe you actually have ruminated on the Ramones-TMBG link (because I think I made it up), I appreciated your story. Keep shredding.

Yours in suburbia,
Arwen

From Dylan in Greensburg, PA:

Dear Arwen,

Do you think that in the punk scene it is patently offensive for a man to tell a woman he thinks she's cute? Seriously...would that be inherently chauvinistic or sexist? How about saying she's beautiful? (Implying: physicality only...assume the guy doesn't know the girl at all.)

Dylan,

When I lived in New York this summer, I could not help but notice the different tone of comments on the street. Instead of something like, "Girl, you got some big legs. What're you doing tonight?" it was more like, "What's up, beautiful?" Maybe the difference is not easily apparent. But when you don't get to decide *whether* you get attention, the flavor of that attention can make a difference. In this context, you can come to appreciate a comment about your face since it's not a comment about your ass.

The level of tolerance over strangers' comments varies widely. Some women talk back to guys on the street and seem pretty sassy and OK with it. Other women feel oppressed by a system where they are routinely stripped of subjecthood at any time, at someone else's whim. I feel both ways, and how much it bothers me depends on what mood I'm in.

As far as the punk scene goes, I don't see why it's different from other arenas when it comes to how you should treat people. The only thing that's different is that, like any social subgroup, it's small enough to (possibly) be under our collective control. Punk scene or not, it's mostly about intention. Ask yourself what you're trying to prove, and who you're trying to prove it to. Something to the woman you're talking to? If she's checking you out, it could be pretty awesome to hear you like her. But it it's out of the blue, what's she supposed to do with that information?

Or, when you tell a girl you think she's hot, is the message actually intended for other men? That's what it is on the street, most of the time. A man asserting his attraction to women in front of other men is asserting his dominance and his heterosexuality.

Most importantly, is the person you're talking to going to be threatened, troubled, put in an awkward situation by your expressions of turned-on-ness? If you're not sure, why not wait for a signal? If the girl isn't in a position to give a signal, why not keep it to yourself?

Hey baby,
Arwen

More Advice for Punk Lovers.

Here's the correct quote, for the record: *"Heav'n has no rage like love to hatred turn'd / Nor Hell a fury, like a woman scorn'd,"* (from

William Congreve's *The Mourning Bride*, 1697). This works pretty well for women, but it also works for men. Love turned to hate is like chocolate milk left on the stove, boiled down into a sweet, sickly, concentrated mess. Once full of delicious promise, now impossible to scrape out of the pan.

So be careful. Be thoughtful. Don't talk to your lover while he is reading. Don't talk to your lover while she is writing, painting, punching holes in the wall, etc. Try to be nice.

Be Nice: A Recipe.

If she is anxious, approach her gently from behind. Take both breasts (if breastless, approximate heart area under rib cage) in one hand and pull her close to your chest. Hold there until breathing becomes regular. If necessary, fall sideways onto bed or floor; remain in same position. Fuck, sleep, or just lie there (best). No talking.

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arwen@maximumrocknroll.com

P.S. This past fall I contributed to a book about wrongfully convicted men and women who have since been exonerated. The book includes exonerees' stories and information about how and why this happens. It's called Surviving Justice, *out now on McSweeneys.*

At the Bookstore

I don't quite remember when I first heard the Dicks. I do remember their music being an integral part of my nascent punk life, a band that I learned the lyrics of fairly early on, singing along and feeling defiant about it. I mean, shit! Those lyrics! How many parents must that band have scared over the past two decades? Of course, I assumed that I'd never see them live, what with being halfway around the world when they were around, and just a wee toddler. I got lucky, though. A bit over a year ago, with little publicity and a punk door price, the original Texas Dicks reformed to play an incendiary show at legendary SF gay bar the Eagle in front of a full house, and the result was pretty spectacular. Finally! A reformed punk band that didn't totally suck, not to mention miss the point of being punk completely.

I had heard that Gary Floyd lived in the neighborhood of the Maximumrocknroll compound within weeks of moving in, but I didn't even know what he looked like now until the night of that Dicks show. He'd slimmed down quite a bit from those early days, but I recognized him immediately. He carried himself around the place with all the self-assuredness in the world, laughing and joking and enjoying all the attention. In the months after the show, I started to notice Gary around the neighborhood here and there. Not sure just where he lived, I'd see him on the bus, or in the corner store, though I'd keep my distance. Even though punk rock is about breaking down boundaries, I didn't want to accost the man while he was on an afternoon stroll, buying a newspaper, or having a cup of coffee.

We were walking—we being a handful of Maximum folk—from MRR HQ to a nearby restaurant at the end of a long day early last week. Paul noticed before anyone else the big pile of books sitting out on the side of the street, but we all stopped to dig through them. There were a couple of guys there already, both with large stacks of stuff that they'd picked out, but the remaining selection was pretty fair, and it was extensive. 19th century literature, books about various Asian and Indian philosophies, old commie mags, and trashy paperbacks about the Roswell cover-up all scattered amongst each other. I picked out an old but proud looking copy of Marx' *Das Kapital* and a book about radical traditions in American blues music. Not bad, I thought.

It was only after we'd all more or less finished searching that one of the men there before us, an older, scraggly-haired, and tie-dye sporting gentleman, began to tell us just what we'd stumbled upon.

"These are Gary Floyd's books, man! It's a lifetime in books, just look at 'em! It's all right here! Gary Floyd, the man is a legend and here we are flippin' through his books."

Of course, this got our attention, which meant that our new friend—Dave, if memory serves—didn't stop talking, and mostly about himself. If I were to take him at his word, he was an integral player at nearly every stage of Bay Area punk, but Paul recognized him and later parsed out some of the truth from the self-made myth for me.

"We're from Maximumrocknroll," Paul told him.

"Maximumrocknroll! Shit man, Tim Yo! I was just thinking about him yesterday!" Dave replied.

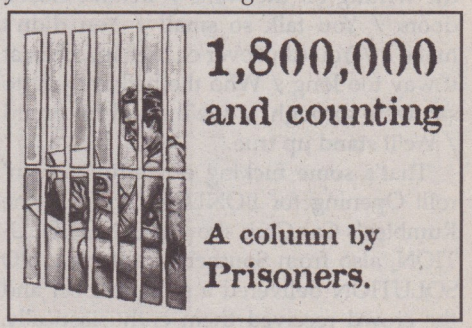
This back and forth went on for a while, with me mostly just hanging back and listening to Dave and Paul reminisce about great old shows and scene characters. And of course, we talked about the Dicks, and the great luck of getting to take home some of Gary's books. I couldn't believe it—I was now the proud owner of Gary's copy of *Das Kapital*—what an honor!

I looked up at a point just beyond Paul's shoulder midway through the conversation and noticed Gary Floyd himself sitting on his second floor balcony just above where we had been standing for the past fifteen minutes. He was sipping on a drink, smiling wryly, and listening to us shoot the shit about the old days, the current days, and whatever else came to mind. We've still never met, but when our eyes met he nodded slightly and shrugged.

Thanks for the books, Gary (not to mention the songs).

***

golnar@maximumrocknroll.com is where you can reach me. The Lebenden Toten 12" and the Pedestrians LP is what you should be listening to.



We Like to Poop

Dear Superintendent,

This is my appeal of grievance #121432, in which I am asking for a modicum of privacy in which to perform my essential bodily functions.

While I appreciate Captain Keeney's proposed solution of allowing me to place a towel over my lap while defecating, that really isn't any kind of privacy. My position is that when there is a standing count four times per day, and I am willing to either assure the guard verbally or show him physically that I am safe, and no security issue is present, there is no purpose other than harassment in not allowing me to place a towel over my door for a period of 15 minutes. Case law has mostly held that prisoners have the right not to be viewed unnecessarily in the nude or while performing private bodily functions, so the

actions of CO Lickenfelt are unconstitutional.

I have attached a brief listing of terms that may prove helpful in understanding why a guard—in this case CO Lickenfelt—would have interest in watching someone take a dump. If he is a coprolangnist, and becomes sexually excited by contact with feces, in this matter I would suggest the contact includes seeing or smelling the fecal matter, even from outside the cell. Whether or not tactile contact with the feces—I mean touching it—is necessary to your own definition of coprolagnia*, I hope you will agree that it is certainly possible he is a coprophiliac, having a marked interest in excrement. That is in fact my own opinion, but it is not a professional one, and I think the Department should take an interest in evaluating the psychological motive for his behavior. In any case, while I am not a pervert myself, I am slightly familiar with the psychology of coprophilia**, and know that in many cases the perversion is satisfied by watching the face of a person defecating contort and strain while experiencing a bowel movement. This is one aspect of why I don't think placing a towel over my lap allows adequate privacy.

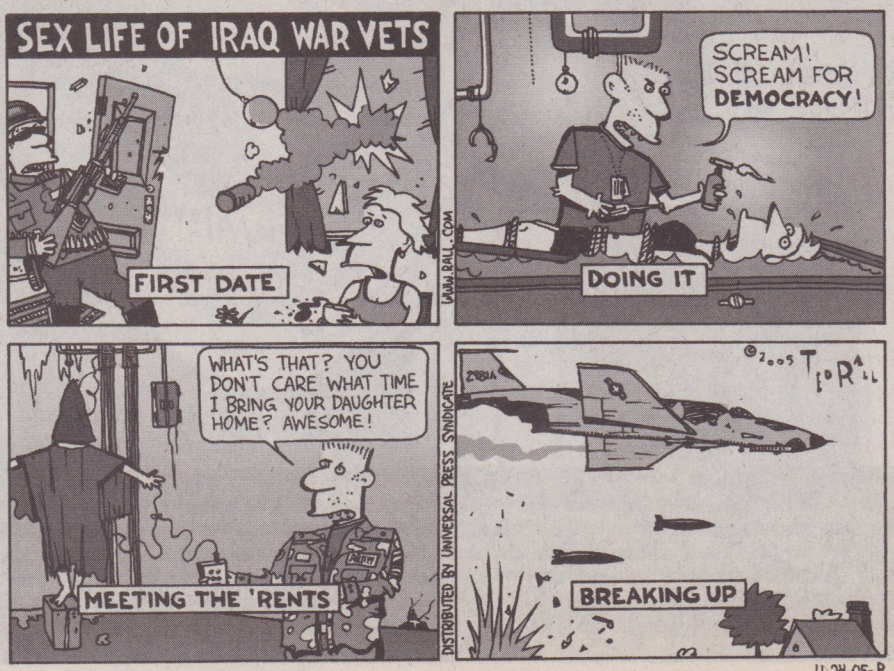
Thank you for giving your time and attention to my appeal, and I apologize for the scatological nature of this subject matter. Please be aware that I do not intend to insult CO Lickenfelt in anyway: I just don't understand his behavior and am suggesting inmates be allowed a 15-minute period of privacy in which to perform their private bodily functions.

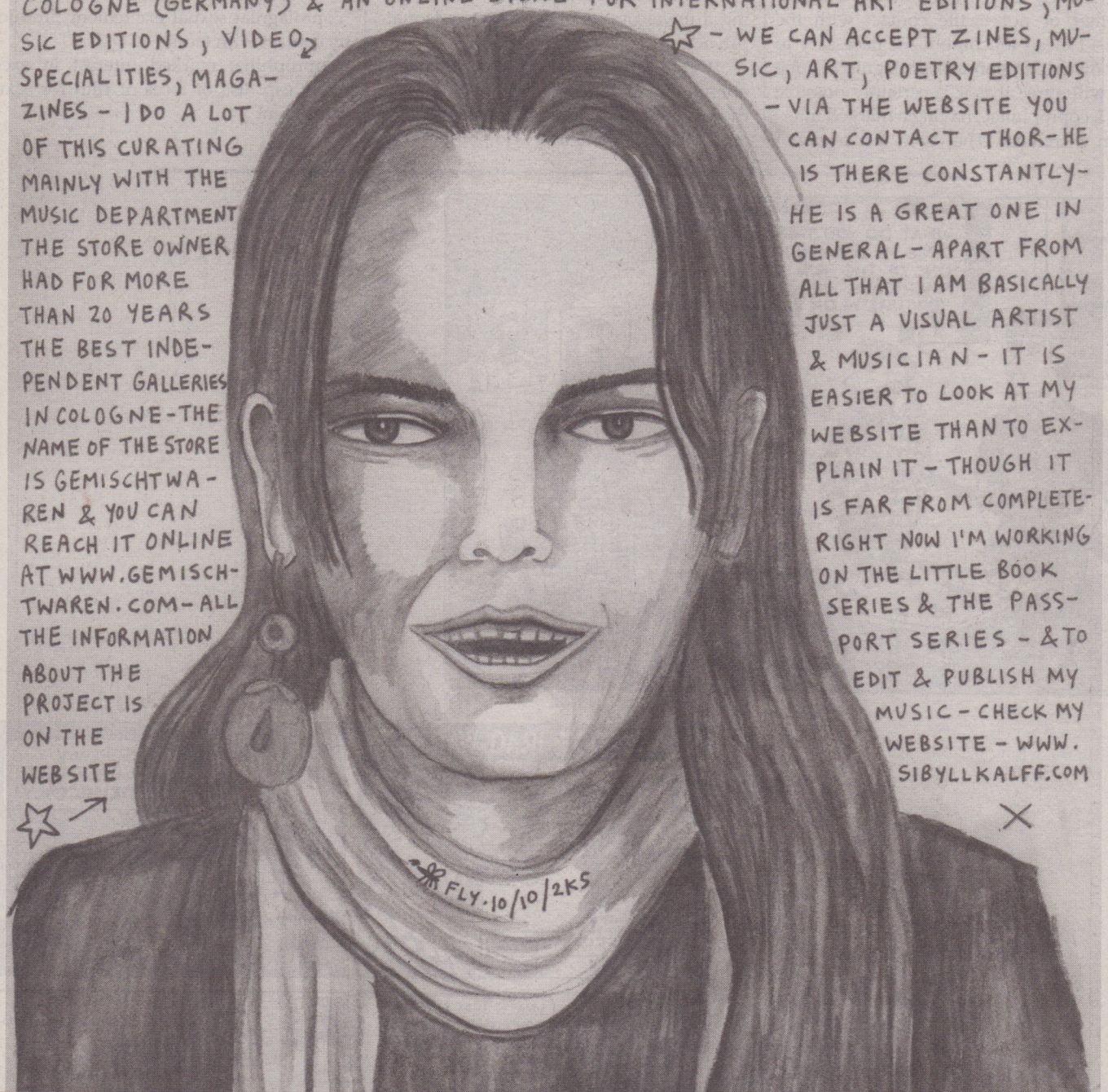
Sincerely,
Jeremy D. Fowler

Jeremy D. Fowler, FJ5052
RD #10, Box 10
Greensburg, PA 15601

*coprolagnia: sexual excitement produced by contact with feces

**coprophilia: marked interest in excrement; esp. use of feces or filth for sexual excitement





Sibyll Kalff – 10/10/2K5 – Lower East Side NYC

I met Sibyll when she sent me an email asking me about getting zines for gemischtwaren – which I think means "General Store" & is a art, zine, book, & music store in Germany – you can check it online at www.gemischtwaren.com – Sibyll is an artist & musician who lives in Germany but would rather be living in New York – she came to hang out with me one day when she was visiting the city & wishing she could stay – you can find her at www.sibyllkalff.com to contact fly email fly@bway.net (put MRR in the subject so i know its not spam) snail mail is fly PO Box 1318 Cooper Stn NYC NY10276 – for a copy of PEOP(le)s #3 zine (including 30 PEOPs!) send $5 post paid in the US

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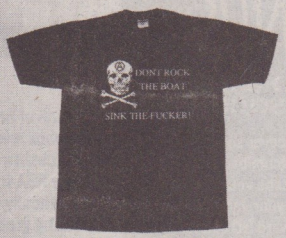

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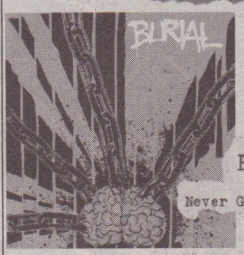

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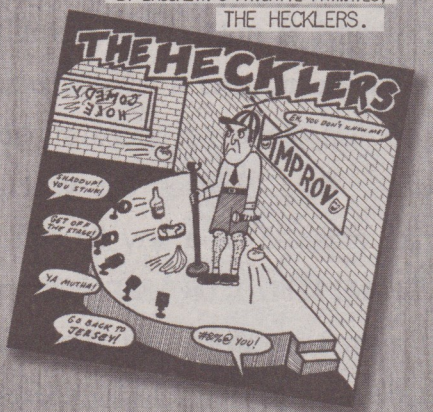

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MRR NEWS

MRR NEWS FOR ISSUE #272 COMPILED BY ARIEL CELESTE

RUSSIAN PUNK MURDERED BY NAZIS

Szarapow

Timur Kacharava 8/21/85 – 11/13/05

Timur was an active member of St. Petersburg's hardcore punk and anarchist community, and our dear friend. On the evening of November 13, Timur became the victim of a Nazi attack. After a Food Not Bombs action on Vladimirskaya square Timur and a few other kids went to a Bukvoyed bookshop on Ligovsky prospect. Around 7 p.m. he and his friend Max "Zgibov" Zgibai were smoking outside when they were attacked by a group of 8 to 10 Nazis. Timur suffered multiple stab wounds in the neck. Zgibov is in the hospital in a stable condition with five stab wounds.

The ambulance arrived in about ten minutes. By then Timur was dead due to heavy blood loss. Zgibov was taken to the Mariinsky Hospital. The police are investigating the incident; they have some suspects. There's a graffiti on the wall next to the place where Timur was murdered, and there are candles, pictures, and flowers his friends placed as a tribute.

Timur was a founding member of the St. Petersburg political hardcore punk band Sandinista!, which formed in 2003. He was the musical leader, writing most of the music and playing lead guitar. The band's debut self-titled CD is to be released on Moscow's Old Skool Kids Records, the same label released a DVD of the Old Skool Kids Fest in September 2004, which features several songs by Sandinista! In the Summer of 2005 Timur also joined the local d-beat hardcore band, Distress. He returned to St. Petersburg from a Scandinavian tour with Distress just a few days before being murdered.

Timur took an active part in the anarchist activities in the city, such as Food Not Bombs group and Epitsentr infoshop. He was also active in day-to-day confrontation with Nazis in the streets. He was a fourth year student of philosophy in St. Petersburg State University, and a committed vegan.

Zgibov was Timur's bandmate in Sandinista! In 2004-2005. Before that Zgibov played bass in hardcore punk band Svinokop and also is a singer and bassist in grind band Potom Budet Pozdno, along with running his own tape label, Ni Esperas.

For US readers: Timur is seen on the Out Cold Live in St. Petersburg DVD dancing, and his voice saying, "Old school hardcore isn't about windmills, dude," is in fact heard as the intro to the film.

He will be loved and remembered by everyone who knew him. He is especially missed by his parents and girlfriend Lyubava.

Sandinista! website:
www.myspace.com/sandinistaxspbhc

GUITARIST LINK WRAY DIES AT 76

Associated Press

COPENHAGEN, Denmark - Guitar master Link Wray, the father of the power chord in rock 'n' roll who inspired legends such as Bruce Springsteen, David Bowie and Pete Townsend, has died.

Wray, 76, died at his home in Copenhagen Nov. 5, a statement from his wife and son on his Web site said. No cause of death was given, but his family said his heart was "getting tired." He was buried quietly after a service at Copenhagen's Christian Church Nov. 18.

"While playing his guitar he often told the audience, 'God is playing my guitar, I am with God when I play,'" his wife, Olive, and son, Oliver Christian, wrote. "We saw you go with God, you were smiling."

Wray developed a style considered the blueprint for heavy metal and punk music. Frequently seen playing in his trademark leather jacket, he is best known for his 1958 instrumental "Rumble," 1959 "Rawhide" and 1963's "Jack the Ripper." His music has been featured in movies including "Pulp Fiction," "Independence Day" and "Desperado."

Wray, who was three-quarters Shawnee Indian, is said to have inspired many other rock musicians, including Pete Townsend of the Who, but also David Bowie, Bob Dylan, Steve Van Zandt and Bruce Springsteen. All have been quoted as saying that Wray and "Rumble" inspired them to become musicians.

"He is the king; if it hadn't been for Link Wray and 'Rumble,' I would have never picked up a guitar,'" Townsend wrote on one of Wray's albums. Neil Young once said: "If I could go back in time and see any band, it would be Link Wray and the Raymen."

The power chord—a thundering sound created by playing fifths (two notes five notes apart, often with the lower note doubled an octave above)—became a favorite among rock players. Wray claimed because he was too slow to be a whiz on the guitar, he had to invent sounds.

When recording "Rumble," he created the fuzz tone by punching holes in his amplifiers to produce a dark, grumbling sound. It took off instantly, but it was banned by some deejays in big cities for seeming to suggest teen violence.

"I was looking for something that Chet Atkins wasn't doing, that all the jazz kings wasn't doing, that all the country pickers wasn't doing. I was looking for my own sound," Wray told The Associated Press in 2002.

He was born Frederick Lincoln Wray Jr. in 1929 in Dunn, NC. His two brothers, Vernon and Doug, were also musicians. The three became a country hit as "Lucky Wray and the Palomino Ranch Hands." Later, after "Rumble," they became "Link Wray and the Raymen," or Wraymen, as it was sometimes spelled. Later, the brothers' relationship soured after a dispute about the rights to "Rumble."

In 1978, he moved to Denmark and married Olive Julie Povlsen. They raised their son in a three-story house on an island where Hans Christian Andersen once lived.

Though he went out of style in the '60s, he was rediscovered by later generations. He toured the United States and Canada since the mid-1990s, playing 40 shows this year. In 2002, Guitar World magazine elected Wray one of the 100 greatest guitarists of all time.

AMY WICHMANN, RIP

Johnny Stingray

It is with great sadness I have to report that my friend and KAOS co-founder, Amy Wichmann passes away.

I received the news from our fellow band member, Lisa Adams. Here is the email I received:

"Amy died on July 28. … I spoke to her not too long before death. She seemed to be doing OK. It was not a suicide—she was on 16 different prescription drugs and apparently went out like "Elvis." I think she would have thought that was cool. She was living in Orlando near her Dad. (She hated the heat.) She died peacefully in bed. She had laundry in the washer and had just started dating someone…so they are still waiting for the report as to exactly why."

She is buried in northern Ohio, next to her Grandmother. Those of you who knew Amy will remember her vivacious personality and her enjoyment of life. She was an accomplished musician and while she got her start as bass player in KAOS, she went on to gain considerable acclaim as a guitarist with Jeff Dahl, Sister Goddamn, and many others.

Personally, I will miss her always. We were not close in recent years, but remained friends.

I will install a memorial and hopefully a forum on the KAOS website for those that would like to leave their respects.

More info on KAOS:
www.kaos1980.com
www.artifixrecords.com/kaos.htm

PRINCIPAL CURBS KIDS' INTERNET ACTIVITY

Asbury Park Press by Laura Bruno

When students post their faces, personal diaries and gossip on websites like MySpace.com and Xanga.com, it is not simply harmless teen fun, according to one Sussex County Catholic school principal.

It's an open invitation to predators and an activity that Pope John XIII Regional High School in Sparta will no longer tolerate, the Rev. Kieran McHugh told a packed assembly of 900 high school students two weeks ago.

Effective immediately, and over student complaints, the teens were told to dismantle their MySpace.com accounts or similar sites with personal profiles and blogs. Defy the order and face suspension, students were told.

While public and private schools routinely block access to noneducational websites on school computers, Pope John's order reaches into students' homes.

The primary impetus behind the ban is to protect students, McHugh said. The websites, popular forums for students to blog about their lives and feelings about their teachers and schools, are fertile ground for sexual predators to gather information about children, he said.

Students, who asked to remain anonymous out of concern for disciplinary action, said the majority of the student body protested the new rule. They tried to argue that they have freedom of speech and the school should not control what they do at home.

"The idea of a private school regulating student activity outside of school is not unheard of and there is a long tradition in it," said Kevin Bankston, staff attorney for the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a San-Francisco-based defender of online civil liberties.

While Pope John's school handbook does not specifically forbid students from creating personal profiles on websites, it does prohibit students from posting anything on the Internet pertaining to the school, without the school's permission.

"It's an incredible overreaction based on an unproven problem," Bankston said. "If they're concerned about safety, they could train students in what they should or shouldn't put online. Kids shouldn't be robbed of the primary communication tool of their generation."

Bankston said he believes the real motivation for school officials was to suppress negative comments about the school posted by students.

One student, who identified himself as a senior who was expelled, wrote that "Pope john kicks you out once you think freely."

METH TO THE MADNESS

On the Media / WNYC

Bob Garfield: And I'm Bob Garfield. If you've been anywhere near the news this season, you already know that meth is hot. By "meth," I mean methamphetamine—tina, crystal, ice—the drug that, according to the media, is being abused at an epidemic rate in this country. The fact that I know the shorthand is not because meth is actually part of my personal life, but because the stories leave the impression that it's just a matter of time until it is. Our show isn't equipped to answer whether meth coverage is appropriately ominous or simply hysterical, but Nick Gillespie, Editor-in-Chief of Reason magazine, says that historically it's the media that have the real drug problem. Nick, welcome to OTM.

Nick Gillespie: Thanks a lot for having me on.

Bob Garfield: First, you know, just for the record, I know you're a libertarian and you want the government off our backs, but you are not saying meth is harmless, meth is great, use meth for recreation. Am I correct?

Nick Gillespie: For the most part I agree with that. Meth or amphetamine, more broadly speaking, can be used in positive ways. The military uses it. Ritalin is a form of amphetamine. So there are actual positive uses of amphetamines, but generally speaking, nobody should be using drugs in an irresponsible way.

Bob Garfield: Okay. So why is the media's handling of drug use and the war on drugs an issue for Reason?

Nick Gillespie: We talk a lot at Reason about what I like to call the "new drug of choice story," which is a real kind of classic of the newspaper and magazine genre. And every couple of months we read stories about the new drug of choice. For a while it was crack cocaine. Then it was PCP, or angel dust. Now it's meth. Tomorrow it will be heroin and we'll learn that, you know, a toxic new form of heroin that's even more potent and cheaper and better and blah, blah, blah will be the new drug of choice. And then after that it'll be marijuana. Then it will be crack again, etcetera. I'm concerned about the "new drug of choice" story. It's a template which really showcases a lot of very cliché journalism, a lot of sloppy journalism. And I think it's mostly fueled not by actual social reality, such as a meth epidemic, which is not going on now, but rather it's fueled by and reflects various social anxieties.

Bob Garfield: But police reports of meth usage and meth arrests are way up, aren't they?

Nick Gillespie: No, actually they're not. And in terms of usage—this is something that's fascinating—the most recent federal figures on drug usage regarding meth date back to 2004, and they are basically the same or a little bit lower than they were in 2003 and 2002. And the federal government in its National Survey on Drug Use and Health actually says up front that there is not a real change in, in meth use.

Bob Garfield: All right. Well, give me some examples, please, of meth reporting gone wild.

Nick Gillespie: Okay. There was the *Newsweek* story that came out in August, which is a kind of one-stop-shop for, you know, ludicrous claims. What it does is it, it will take a couple of examples of people whose lives have been screwed up by substance abuse, and that's all true. It sought to show that there was an epidemic but, in fact, there are no hard numbers in there about usage trends or anything like that. Last year in the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, okay, which is a well-regarded paper, they quoted a nurse who said that she had heard of a "meth baby" born with an arm growing out of the neck. And the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* actually reported this. They did not find the baby, they did not find any record of the baby, but rather they report hearsay from a nurse who's talking about something she heard about. That type of very poorly-documented claim runs rampant throughout drug reporting in this country. Also over-reliance on law enforcement—reporters never document the claims. For instance, the *New York Times* had a story about "meth babies" a few months ago, and in response to that and a bunch of other stories like it, which all quoted law enforcement people saying that there was something called "meth babies" and that babies are born addicted to meth, about 100 drug researchers and medical experts at a group called Join Together wrote a public letter saying, you know, we have to change the way that we talk about drugs in this country because it just doesn't make sense.

Bob Garfield: Coverage of drugs has always been a bit hysterical.

Nick Gillespie: Yes.

Bob Garfield: As a young police reporter, I myself tagged along on quite a few drug raids, including a meth lab, by the way in about 1978, and was always surprised by the cops' estimate of the street value of the haul.

Nick Gillespie: Sure.

Bob Garfield: It was always wildly inflated with a sort of Joe Friday—

Nick Gillespie: Mm-hmm.

Bob Garfield:—"this is what happens when you fool around with Mary Jane" kind of quality to it. And I guess we as reporters should be embarrassed about that. But where's the harm?

Nick Gillespie: Well, there's a lot of harm in this. First off, if you have hysterical over-reporting, both on the part of law enforcement and the media, everybody turns off. A great example of this is the Tennessee District Attorney's Association has a website called "Meth is Death," which they put up recently. I mean, this site is linked to prominently by the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration, so it's giving it its imprimatur on some level. But this Meth is Death site says that one in seven high school students will try meth. Okay? And follow the kind of math on this. One in seven high school students will try meth; 99 percent of first-time meth users are hooked after just the first try, and only five percent of meth addicts are able to kick it and stay away. So basically what we're looking at is about 13 percent of high schoolers are going to try meth and become meth addicts. And according to the site, the life expectancy of a habitual meth user is only five years. And this is on, you know, from district attorneys, and we're supposed to take this seriously. And what that means—there's about 20 million high school age kids in America—and what that means, there should be hundreds of thousands of people who are dying of meth-related deaths, you know, in their early 20s. And we know that that isn't true. And yet this type of, you know, bizarro claims and chains of association are out there, and this is what passes for official information about drugs. It's just ridiculous. The harms of those claims is that then it means that it's very hard to get through with actual meaningful information to people.

Bob Garfield: It seems to me that a year does not go by where you don't pick up a copy of Newsweek and find some drug scare story. And I asked you, you know, okay, where's the harm in that? But what I was thinking is that we do, in fact, have an ongoing drug crisis, a chronic drug crisis in this country around alcohol, and yet the media coverage of it seems to be, you know, if not nonexistent, at least pretty thin.

Nick Gillespie: Well, I think we actually do talk about alcohol a lot but we talk about it in a more mature way and in a way that actually sheds light on how we should talk about drugs, which is instead of constantly talking about illegal or illicit drugs, as the government terms them—these substances are not merely illegal but immoral—if we talked about—not about demon rum or not about demon meth, but rather about people who have problems with substance abuse, I think we would have a more mature and just a richer discussion about drugs and substance abuse, which is really the issue.

Bob Garfield: Okay, Nick. Well, thank you very much.

Nick Gillespie: You're welcome. Thanks for having me.

Bob Garfield: Nick Gillespie is Editor-in-Chief of Reason magazine.

COMING SOON, ON RODENT POPSICLE...

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Songbirds may be the Sinatras of the animal world, but male mice can carry a tune too, say Washington University researchers who were surprised by what they heard.

Scientists have known for decades that male lab mice produce high-frequency sounds — undetectable by human ears — when they pick up the scent of a female mouse. This high-pitched babble is presumably for courtship, although scientists are not certain.

But it turns out those sounds are more complex and interesting than previously thought.

"It soon became ... apparent that these vocalizations were not random twitterings but songs," said researcher Timothy Holy. "There was a pattern to them. They sounded a lot like bird songs."

To make their point, the researchers provided audio recordings of the sounds, which have been modified for human ears. The recordings do indeed sound birdlike.

The findings by the researchers at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis are published online Tuesday in the journal Public Library of Science Biology.

If the analysis by the researchers is confirmed, mice can be added to the short list of creatures that sing in the presence of the opposite sex, including songbirds, humpback whales, porpoises, insects and, possibly, bats.

"There was joy in this discovery," Holy said. "We didn't expect it."

The finding opens the possibility of using mice to study and develop treatments for autism and other communication disorders, said Holy, the lead author and assistant professor of neurobiology and anatomy at the university's medical school.

Bird song, how it is perceived and learned, is used to understand how the human brain works. But some questions might be posed better with mice, for experimental convenience, he said.

If it is true that the male mice are producing songs, it raises questions about how their sounds develop and whether mice — like birds — are able to learn new sounds, said animal communication expert Peter Marler, a behavioral neurobiologist at University of California, Davis.

He said "extraordinarily little" is known about how the human brain helps people learn to speak.

"We don't know even where to look in the (human) brain," he said. "If it were to turn out that (mice) songs are learned, and that parts of the brain are involved in learning, that might open a new area of investigation."

Marler said the only mammals known to learn new sounds are whales and porpoises, and "they're not exactly ideal for study."

Holy and co-author Zhongsheng Guo were studying the brain response in male mice to chemical signals emitted by female mice. The mice sounds were not audible without technical amplification. Initially, researchers recorded the sounds with a microphone, stored them in a computer and converted them to an image.

Later, they developed a way to hear the sounds by recording them on tape and reconstructing them four octaves lower. Holy said the mice sounds met two key criteria for song — distinct syllables and recurring themes, "like the melodic hook in a catchy tune."

He said their finding is not just perception, but a "very careful quantitative analysis of sounds."

Holy said adult bird songs are much more practiced, predictable and refined than those of mice, but even birds don't start out as great singers. They learn.

On the Net:

To download samples of mouse song modified to make them audible to humans, go to:

http://mednews.wustl.edu/news/page/normal/6040.html

GREEK ANARCHISTS ATTACK FRENCH SCHOOLS

Reuters

ATHENS — Groups of anarchists broke windows, threw paint and spray-painted slogans at French cultural institutes in Athens and northern Greece in support of rioters in France, Greek police said on Friday.

About 50 people, wearing hoods and helmets and carrying red and black flags, threw stones, spark plugs and bottles filled with paint at the central Athens French Institute on Friday morning, breaking windows and damaging parked vehicles. Police said there were no injuries and the group dispersed quickly after the attack.

Another group attacked the French institute in the northern city of Thessaloniki on Thursday evening, smashing windows while classrooms were filled with language students. They spray-painted "Rioters Are Right" on the front of the building.

"They just appeared out of nowhere, I think about 70 or 80 of them. They smashed everything and we just sat there terrified," one student told reporters. Poor French suburbs have been hit by two weeks of rioting. French police have arrested hundreds of people in what is considered the most serious unrest since student-led protests in 1968.

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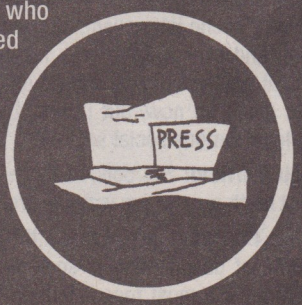

KILLED BY DEATH...*NOT*!

From *The Chronicle of Higher Education*
By Thomas Bartlett

Cambridge, England — If you wish to be a prophet, first you must dress the part. No more silk ties or tasseled loafers. Instead, throw on a wrinkled T-shirt, frayed jeans, and dirty sneakers. You should appear somewhat unkempt, as if combs and showers were only for the unenlightened. When you encounter critics, as all prophets do, dismiss them as idiots. Make sure to pepper your conversation with grandiose predictions and remind others of your genius often, lest they forget. Oh, and if possible, grow a very long beard.

By these measures, Aubrey de Grey is indeed a prophet. The 42-year-old English biogerontologist has made his name by claiming that some people alive right now could live for 1,000 years or longer. Maybe much longer. Growing old is not, in his view, an inevitable consequence of the human condition; rather, it is the result of accumulated damage at the cellular and molecular levels that medical advances will soon be able to prevent — or even reverse — allowing people to go on living pretty much indefinitely. We'll still have to worry about angry bears and falling pianos, but aging, the biggest killer of all, will cease to be a threat. Death, as we know it, will die.

Mainstream gerontologists do not agree and hate to even raise the topic in public. They shy away from talk about life extension or "curing" aging and prefer to focus on keeping older people healthy for as long as possible, a goal referred to in the discipline as "compression of morbidity" or "healthspan." Many of them write off Mr. de Grey as more beard than brain.

So…is he crazy? Not in the sense that he is divorced from reality or just making things up as he goes along. Mr. de Grey is a serious, thoughtful, sincere, prolific, even brilliant researcher and thinker who seems to have devoted every last ounce of his intellect to conquering the single biggest medical menace facing mankind. Along the way, he has acquired plenty of supporters and detractors — and gained the respect of some of the top scientists in the world.

He even has a plan. It is, to say the least, ambitious, and it depends on a number of techniques and treatments that have yet to be developed (curing cancer, for instance, is one of the steps). His approach, which he has dubbed Strategies for Engineered Negligible Senescence, draws from different branches of science and medicine and is enough to spin the heads of specialists and nonspecialists alike. It has also caused a stir, something Mr. de Grey certainly knows how to do. "One hundred and fifty thousand people die every day, and two-thirds of those die of aging in one way or the other," he says, while nursing a pint of fine English ale. "If I speed up the cure for aging by one day, then I've saved 100,000 people." He pauses thoughtfully for a moment. "Actually, I probably do that every week."

A Bounty on His Theory

He also has a talent for drumming up publicity. His eccentricities (the long beard, the thrift-store clothes, the pub crawling) appeal to journalists looking for a colorful feature subject. There is also his willingness — eagerness, in fact — to explain his plan for fighting aging to any reporter with a notebook and time to kill. More publicity, he hopes, will lead to more donations. The donations can then be used to help finance the kinds of research Mr. de Grey believes are most important.

Not every article, however, has taken a gee-whiz tone. In February, Technology Review, which is owned by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, published an article about Mr. de Grey along with an editorial written by Jason Pontin, the magazine's editor. The article, by Sherwin Nuland, a clinical professor of surgery at Yale University's School of Medicine and the author of How We Die, concluded that Mr. de Grey was "neither a madman nor a bad man" but that his plan "will almost certainly not succeed." And, even if it did, Mr. de Grey "would surely destroy us in attempting to preserve us" because living for such long periods would undermine what it means to be human.

The editorial took a more ad hominem approach. Mr. Pontin wrote that Mr. de Grey "drinks too much beer" and that even though he's just in his early 40s "the signs of decay are strongly marked on his face." He also called the potential social consequences of extending life indefinitely "terrible" and wrote that Mr. de Grey "thinks he is a technological messiah."

The response to the article and the editorial was extraordinary and extremely negative. Mr. Pontin says he has received thousands of e-mail messages, many of them from "enraged" readers. "It was as if I was personally depriving them of the possibility of immortality," he says. The online version of the article has been clicked on nearly a million times, making it by far the most-read article in the history of the magazine.

Readers criticized the magazine for dismissing Mr. de Grey's ideas as ludicrous without ever fully engaging with them. Because of the enormous and unexpected reaction, Mr. Pontin decided to do something unusual: He commissioned Cynthia Kenyon, a professor of biochemistry and biophysics at the University of California at San Francisco and director of the Hillblom Center for the Biology of Aging, to review Mr. de Grey's ideas and write a follow-up. Ms. Kenyon is well-known among gerontologists and has made some important discoveries of her own. By altering a gene in a roundworm, she extended its life span from two weeks to 20 weeks, which may or may not have implications for humans.

Ms. Kenyon agreed to write the article and then, three months later, she backed out. Why she did this remains unclear. She declined a telephone interview with The Chronicle, citing a hectic travel schedule, but in an e-mail message wrote that she was "overwhelmed with other commitments then and didn't have time to do a good job."

Mr. Pontin then decided to put a bounty of sorts on Mr. de Grey, offering $10,000 to any gerontologist who could prove to an independent review panel that his ideas about radical life-extension had no merit. Mr. de Grey then upped the ante, matching the $10,000 through his Methuselah Foundation, making the prize for debunking him a generous $20,000.

You might think researchers would be lining up. In fact, no: So far Mr. Pontin has had no takers. He has also had trouble finding scientists willing to sit on the independent panel. Mr. de Grey sees the entire episode as a giant victory, particularly the fact that a prominent scientist such as Ms. Kenyon took up the project, then abandoned it. This is proof, he says, that "they can't ignore me any longer."

For Mr. Pontin, it is all somewhat exasperating. "People want to stay as far away from this as possible," he sighs. "If he's as crazy as people say, then even in lieu of experimental data, it should be possible to get someone to say why he's crazy."

Outrunning Death

"Aubrey's always arguing against people who tell him he's crazy," says Graham Pawelec, a professor of experimental immunology at the University of Tübingen in Germany. "I have never heard him lose an argument."

Mr. Pawelec is one of Mr. de Grey's staunch supporters. He quotes him often, beginning sentences by saying "Remember what Aubrey tells us ... ." He puts a lot of stock in Mr. de Grey's "escape velocity" theory. This is, in short, the idea that in the next 10 or 20 years science will have advanced sufficiently to allow people to live for, say, 150 or 200 years. And then by the time those people turn 200, science will have figured out how to allow them to live to 500. It is not that the battle against aging will be over shortly, but that there will be enough steady progress so that we can all live forever. More or less.

"In 10 years, we will have proof that we can cure these seven things and therefore beat aging," says Mr. Pawelec, who spoke at the conference on "immunorejuvenation" in the elderly. "All of my mainstream colleagues will be up there saying Aubrey was right. And then the general public will believe it."

But, even at Mr. de Grey's own conference, there was no shortage of doubters. Among them was David Finkelstein, program administrator for the Metabolic Regulation Program at the National Institute on Aging. He came to the conference, he says, because it attracts "some of the most creative scientists around." But he is definitely not one of Mr. de Grey's acolytes. "Is there a kernel of truth in what Aubrey says? Absolutely. Will it happen in the short term?" Mr. Finkelstein shakes his head. "To say if we solve these seven things we'll live to 1,000? That's hyperbole. I don't like hyperbole."

Some of Mr. de Grey's more extreme statements make it hard to take him seriously, according to Mr. Finkelstein: "There are people who say that if Aubrey says it must be right then it must be wrong." At the same time, despite his criticism, Mr. Finkelstein has some appreciation for Mr. de Grey's role as provocateur. "I like him," he says. "He ruffles feathers. He has the balls to say stuff."

The question is whether that stuff will prove to be true. Gregory M. Fahy, a biologist and vice president and chief scientific officer of 21st Century Medicine, a biomedical research company, was very skeptical at first. While they still do not agree on everything, Mr. Fahy has been largely won over. And, like Mr. Finkelstein, he respects Mr. de Grey for his courage in the face of ridicule. "If you think you're right, you have to stand up and say what you believe even if people think you're nuts," says Mr. Fahy. "Now, if they prove you're nuts, you have to shut up. But that hasn't happened yet."

ONTARIO MOM FACES $2M LIBEL SUIT FOR WEBSITE ABOUT PROBLEMS IN NEIGHBORHOOD

By Mike Oliveira (CP)

A stay-at-home mother of three who created a website to alert the government about allegedly dangerous environmental problems in her southwestern Ontario neighbourhood is facing a $2 million libel suit by one of the developers she reported on.

Louisette Lanteigne of Waterloo, Ont., said she grew sick of what she saw during construction in her new subdivision and what appeared to be questionable building practices and labour-code violations.

She said she was constantly keeping her kids and their friends out of trouble, as they would keep running into hazards around their neighbourhood. She petitioned city council and got help but new problems would appear as quickly as the old ones got fixed, she said.

"They call me an environmental activist, but I see myself as more of a mom who's just trying to be heard," said the 36-year-old mother of three girls aged 21 months, nine and 12.

"My kids were at risk and nobody helped me, and I'm worried about other kids too, that's the bottom line," she said in a telephone interview, breaking into tears. "Nobody protected me and now I'm getting sued."

She launched her website in April to document her complaints and as a means for the province's Environment and Labour ministries to view the evidence she collected. She made about a dozen postings with photos and stories of sightings around her area.

Her efforts led to letters and kudos from various government officials for reporting alleged violations. Then-environment minister Leona Dombrowsky wrote her to say, "Your advocacy on behalf of your neighbourhood is commendable and I encourage you to contact the ministry . . .to report any further incidents."

Environment Ministry spokesman John Steele said work by people like Lanteigne is of great value because there aren't enough ministry workers available to spot every infraction.

"Obviously we can't have staff everywhere all the time, so we depend on the public out there as surrogate eyes and ears for the ministry," Steele said. "They're an important part of the ministry's work."

But not everyone was happy with her reports.

On Sept. 16, Lanteigne received news that she was being sued for libel by developer Activa Holdings Inc., one of the largest developers in the region.

The statement of claim said "the malicious, high-handed and arrogant conduct of the Defendant warrants an award of punitive or exemplary damages to ensure that the Defendant is appropriately punished for her conduct and deterred from such conduct in the future."

The company sought $2 million and an order to have the allegedly libellous material taken offline.

"The website contains numerous untrue statements and defamatory statements about Activa," said the company's lawyer Greg Murdoch.

"Activa is in this unfortunate position where it has to proceed with this lawsuit."

The statement of claim outlines stories by Lanteigne involving diesel oil spills on subdivision sites, unlocked oil tanks, roofers working without proper safety equipment and possible contamination of soil and water.

Activa claims the website has caused damage to its reputation and launched the lawsuit only after Lanteigne refused to apologize and take down the site.

The statement of claim states Lanteigne acted "in bad faith with knowledge that (her words) were false, or with reckless disregard for their truth or falsity." It states that the articles were "deliberately written in a tone of language intended to discredit and harm the reputation of the Plaintiff."

Lanteigne said she stands by everything she wrote and isn't backing down.

"I learned the only way they could get me to remove the site was with an injunction, and an injunction would mean they would have to bring this information in front of a judge," Lanteigne said.

"I thought, 'That's excellent,' because I need a judge to see what's going on here."

Some U.S. states have seen so many libel or defamation lawsuits that legislation has been created to help people take on cases against more powerful opponents.

The legislation is typically called anti-SLAPP, an acronym for Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation.

The laws reduce the risk of fighting lawsuits because if the plaintiff loses, they are responsible for all the legal fees. In Lanteigne's case, she will have to pay her lawyer regardless of the outcome.

"Typically with David-Goliath-type situations where a citizen is faced with large legal costs and aggressive litigious companies, it takes a lot of courage to persevere," said Rick Smith, executive director for advocacy organization Environmental Defence Canada.

While Lanteigne may not have $2 million to pay Activa, she does have a lot to lose and could be forced into bankruptcy.

Murdoch said Activa realizes it's risking negative PR but the company thinks the lawsuit is the only way to defend its reputation.

"Ultimately, they're confident it will be resolved in their favour," Murdoch said. "They're confident the right public perception will come about."

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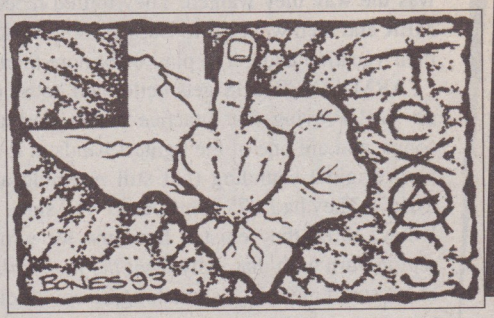
AUSTIN, TX



It has been a long and sad summer in Austin, Texas, but we're still going strong. In the span of three weeks, we lost two pioneers in Austin's punk history. Dixon Edge Coulborn of *Idle Time* fanzine (archived at www.wedigdixon.com) and Randy "Biscuit" Turner, singer of the legendary BIG BOYS both passed away. Their untimely absences have served as a reminder to live life to its fullest, just as both of those men always did.

Last weekend there was a tribute held in Biscuit's honor to raise money for his family. Please check out the website www.randybiscuitturner.com for more information. A number of local bands old and new played to celebrate their friend's life. Included was a reunion by old-time pals THE DICKS, who have played a few shows here this summer. The band was as powerful as any that I've seen in years.

A true testament to the influence of Biscuit, Dixon, and bands like THE DICKS can be seen in the vibrant scene of today. It's been about a year since there's been a scene report on our town, so gather round the fire and let us catch you up on what's new.

First things first: my personal favorites since inception, BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE (BSA). I should note that BSA isn't actually from Austin. They hail from six hours south of here in Alamo, TX. But since Alamo is a lonely place and we love them so, they made the cut. They recorded some time ago with Stan from SIGNAL LOST behind the mixing board. Two EPs from that session have seen light of day. The first was put out by local Timmy Hefner on his 540 Records and is in its second pressing at the time of this writing. The second EP was released by Minneapolis Skell at Distort Records. The covers are still not done due to a holdup caused by the idiot artist who designed the cover, but the band did manage to get a small run of covers made for their US tour. Their sound is an awesome mixture of 80s Swedish hardcore with Japanese hardcore leads. Live they are one of the best here or anywhere, and as an added bonus you can usually make out with pretty boy guitarist, Migas (fun for boys or girls). We've heard rumors of an upcoming twelve-inch and split with SIN ORDEN, not to mention some comp appearances. Cross your fingers for these, but in the meantime pick up the records they already have out and thank me later.

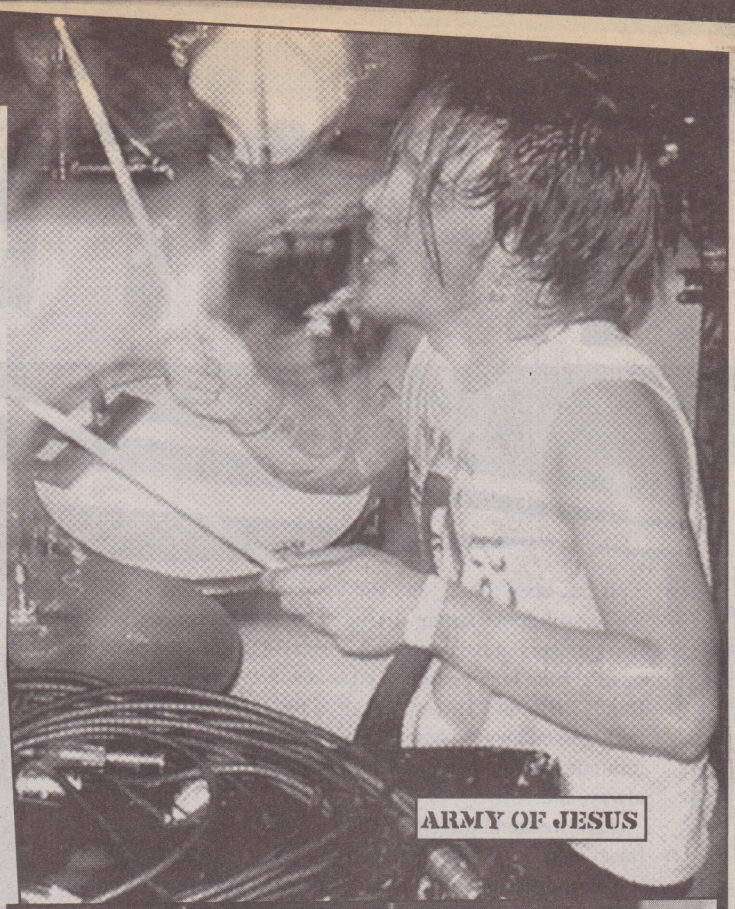
SIGNAL LOST is stronger than ever and have recorded for a

ARMY OF JESUS

7" and an upcoming compilation LP. The EP was released by Communichaos in Europe and Prank in the States. The new songs rock harder then the previous stuff; one song even has been referred to as their CRUDE song. Though it is more hardcore then the previous effort, the songs still shine with Ashley's voice. The recording is better as the band did it themselves and had more time to make sure it was the way they wanted. They toured recently with Japan's HAMMER and then went off to Europe for a while. I sure hope they enjoy their vacation and get to play with more than a few *epic* bands.

ARMY OF JESUS gets better and better every time I see them—no shit! Proving that practice makes perfect, they've refined their songs, and are one of the tightest bands in town. Their new songs are very original sounding (but still retaining a bit of VOID/80s good lovin'). They had a 7" come out as well since we last reported (in fact, I don't think they existed last time we wrote). It makes my lower region burn with that itchy *what the fuck is that* feeling. One member has assured me this is something he could relate to. It makes me able to rest at night knowing that there are still bands delving into the past to pull out something relevant for the present. I hope you saw them on there tour with BSA this summer. As of this writing, they've just recorded another eleven songs for two EPs. Perhaps some smart label will be in touch with them soon about releasing one of them.

One of the best local bands is MANIKIN. Time after time this three-piece amazes me with there WARSAW/WIPERS fun. A new CD just came out on Super Secret vinyl is forthcoming on 540 Records. They seem to transcend any *scenes* in town and fit in on pretty much any bill. I have only high praise for them taking the leap and nestling



ARMY OF JESUS

BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE

in because as far as I can tell most people are loving it.

CNN isn't enough death and destruction for some so CENTURY OF WAR is here to remind us all that there is a price to pay in your middleclass comfort. They recently recorded four songs with Jack Control tweaking the knobs. Last I heard Fight Records in Finland is doing their EP. If you dig heavy Swedish sounds with absolutely no melodic crap then I can see you being into this. I saw them with SEEIN' RED in July and it was the best so far! I can see them progressing into a mad staggering destruction unit.

Those sabotage mutineers WORLD BURNS TO DEATH just got back from a devastating trip to the Bay Area where they played with CROW and recorded their masterpiece. *Over the top* is an understatement so clutch your GISM *Man* LP close to your heart and get ready. Besides the new LP, they're hard at work on a DVD for Prank Records that was filmed by up and coming punker, Manic Max. I am hoping it will include true life bios on all of them but I think it is going to be a comp of various live shows and a redoing of JUDAS PRIEST's "Hot Rocket" video.

When WBTD members aren't busy in WBTD, they're all busy with other projects. Flying the D-beat flag, KEGCHARGE have made a name for themselves with their debut LP and wild live shows. Remember: war is bad! They've been writing new songs and will hopefully be recording in a few months.

Also, the man behind KEGCHARGE and WBTD, guitarist Zac has also been playing with some other locals in town. We are waiting patiently for their first show so we can tell you what they sound like! Another band in the WBTD family is KREMATORIUM DOGS, a LAMA-styled project. Though they've been practicing for about a year, no one has yet let the dogs out. We'll keep you updated on both of these projects!

Speaking of dogs, longtime scenesters LAUGHING DOGS are still going strong. In fact, they've just released a CD. I've yet to hear it, but if it's half as good as their live show you'll be sure to remember it.

I don't know if we included MODERN NEEDS last time so forgive me if I retrace ground here. They are a Fred Cole (RATS/DEAD MOON) inspired three-piece. Sarah from NJ's SOMETHING IN THE WATER (and the short-lived band SURRENDER) plays guitar and sings; Stan from SIGNAL LOST plays bass; and Brett from STORM THE TOWER handles the drums. If you like catchy melodies and vocals you may dig this band—I do. They made a rough practice tape to give to some out of town friends who wanted to check them out during the *Chaos in Tejas* fest, and recently recorded some songs with—you guessed it—Stan. Totally original and I hope more people take notice when they finally get some recordings out there. They're my pick for this reports *keep an eye out for* band. It is still up in the air what is happening with the eleven songs they recorded.

MAYDAY has an EP out on Reprocreation Records. I haven't seen them in ages cuz mommy doesn't let me go out when the streetlights are on, but they play often and shred hard. Vocalist Jeremy is beginning to campaign for mayor of North Loop (the street where he lives).

COMPLETE CONTROL forges onward. They recently had a slight lineup change, and are better than ever. Buy the LP! It's much better than releases from old UK bands playing the same style that should've stayed broken up. COMPLETE CONTROL is going to be doing a tour with SMALLTOWN from Sweden very soon.

Spikes unite! Arguably the most popular band in town, KRUMBUMS have a CD and 7" out now, both of which are easily obtained from Hardcore Holocaust. They also have out

a new split EP with COMPLETE CONTROL.

STORM THE TOWER has had their recording sitting around changing various formats but I think finally it will end up being a 7" on Lil' Deputy Records. Shit, I can't even remember how many songs there are. They are way underrated and have an ARTICLES OF FAITH/INSTIGATORS feel to them. They are original and awesome live. The new 7" also has some weirdo artwork that might throw people off as to just what might lay hidden in them grooves.

Long-time pop punk all-stars J CHURCH continue to keep on truckin'. The band recently returned from a trip to Japan where they had the time of their lives. In fact, they had so much fun with the bands there that they've planned to bring over their friends URCHIN for a short US tour this November that is anchored around the Gainesville Fest.

TOTAL SOUND GROUP DIRECT ACTION COMMITTEE continues to get together a few times a year to spread the testimonial! Sadly, they had to cancel their recently scheduled show with DMBQ, but I'm sure they'll play again soon. Guitarist Tim Kerr is keeping himself busy with an always hectic schedule. Besides recording bands at local studio Sweatbox, he recently had an art exhibit at local record store End of an Ear.

THE WINKS recently released their second CD on Super Secret Records (with vinyl by Rockin' Bones). They also had a short tour in the spring, but I haven't noticed them on many flyers around town. Perhaps they're just taking a break while Penny's new band, TOKYO NITES, heats up! The 'NITES feature Penny on vocals backed by BJ from MANIKIN and a few of their closest friends. We have not heard them yet, but expect it to be a loud, snotty, and in your face. A single is promised on Super Secret records.

Relative newcomers, but hot on the scene is THIS DAMN TOWN, who plays dirty, bluesy rock 'n' roll. They have quite a pedigree, with members having served time with MANIKIN, GOSPEL SWINGERS, FEAST OF SNAKES, NOW TIME DELEGATION, DIRTY SWEETS, RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS, and many, many more. Yow! Expect records on Shake Your Ass, Solid Sex Lovie Doll, and about as many more labels as members' previous bands.

No monkey business with APE SHITS, who plays out quite regularly. We are unaware of any releases from them, but a few tunes can be found on their myspace page, so hopefully that is an indication that a record is on the way.

CAMP X-RAY has been around for a few years without any releases, but we think that'll change soon. They recently recorded with Tim Kerr at Sweatbox studios for a split LP with STORM THE TOWER that has been split apart into 7" from each band.

THE UGLY BEATS is a great 60s revival band who've put out records on Get Hip. Their shows are always a great time. Sets full of covers of classics and their stomping originals. One of my personal favorite bands to see in town.

IRON AGE is members of FAR FROM BREAKING doing some CRO-MAGS styled head crushing core. They'll have an LP out soon on Young Blood. Their music makes me want to do drugs and lurk in alleys to kill people to.

I've also been hearing a lot about THE ARM, THE YUPPIE PRICKS, THE CRACK PIPES, PEACHTRAIN, and the FACELESS WEREWOLVES, but I can't know everything about every band in town, can I? Nevertheless, we'll make sure to check out their next show if you promise to do the same!

Sadly, COLD ERA has broken up, but members are concentrating on ARMY OF JESUS, HATRED SURGE, and dozens more. Also

MANIKIN

goners are THE KODIAKS who recently called it quits after two singles and a few hundred local shows. We hear that the singer and one of the guitarists have a new group up their sleeves.

With all of these bands, you must be wondering where they play! And if you weren't wondering, we'll tell you anyway. Beerland is the punkest club in town. With Monday night karaoke, the happiest happy hour around, and non-stop punk/garage/rock n' roll, we give it two thumbs way up! Stop by on any given night and chances are you'll see at least two bands listed above.

Down the road is an Austin institution: Emo's. The club has two rooms for shows and is the only club in town that does all ages shows. Many a touring band such as SKITSYSTEM, DEAD MOON, and HAMMER have played there and it's been the home two years in a row for the Prank Records/Timmy Hefner fest!

It's somewhat misleading to say that Emo's is the only all ages club in town, because the under-21 are much more resourceful than that. Instead of staying down on 6th Street and finding a club that'll have them, they're out scouring town for more sympathetic ears. Lately there have been a bunch of shows at a BBQ joint with an outdoor stage called Poke-Jo's. We're not sure how the food is, but anyone who lets 200 drunken maniacs into their establishment to see RIISTETYT is A-OK by us!

The strip on North Loop Boulevard has been home to many great shows. All the fine establishments there have opened their doors to the punk rock at some point or another. Monkeywrench Books, Sound on Sound Records, and The Parlor restaurant have all had some of the best shows in recent memory.

If it's time for fun, Austinites have been known to have shows down on the Pedestrian Bridge which has a power outlet, making it the perfect location for late-night shows. Always one to one-up the rest, Timmy recently rented a boat for the SKITKIDS show. It did, indeed, end up being one of the best shows ever!

All of the local labels have been busy little beavers lately. Super Secret Records just released the previously mentioned MANIKIN CD and has plans for releases from TOKYO NITES, SPARKLE-MOTION, HOT RAILS, and NERVOUS EXIT.

Hardcore Holocaust label has a few tricks up its sleeve, as well. First up is the *Portland City Hardcore 2005* LP with LEBENDEN TOTEN, DOG SOLDIER, HELLSHOCK, ASSASSINATE. It should be out by the time you read this! After that is the second full-length from WORLD BURNS TO DEATH. Jay's got many, many more releases after that, so check out his website for updates (and while you're at it, browse his amazing distro: www.hardcoreholocaust.com).

Last but not least, it is with great honor that we report to you that Jack Barfield, the man responsible for all the great photos you see alongside this article, was named Austin's best poster artist by local weekly *The Austin Chronicle*. Considering this town's rich history of great poster art, we consider that an incredibly honor. Good work, Jack. And remember, vote Nunez in 2008!

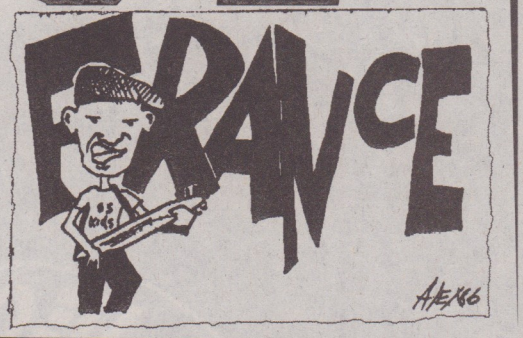
When in Austin, be sure to check out as many of these bands as possible. Recordings by most of them can be obtained at Sound on Sound Records (106 E. North Loop Blvd; www.soundonsoundrecords.com) or End of an Ear (2209 South First St; www.endofanear.com). Both of these stores are great and are supportive of the local scene.

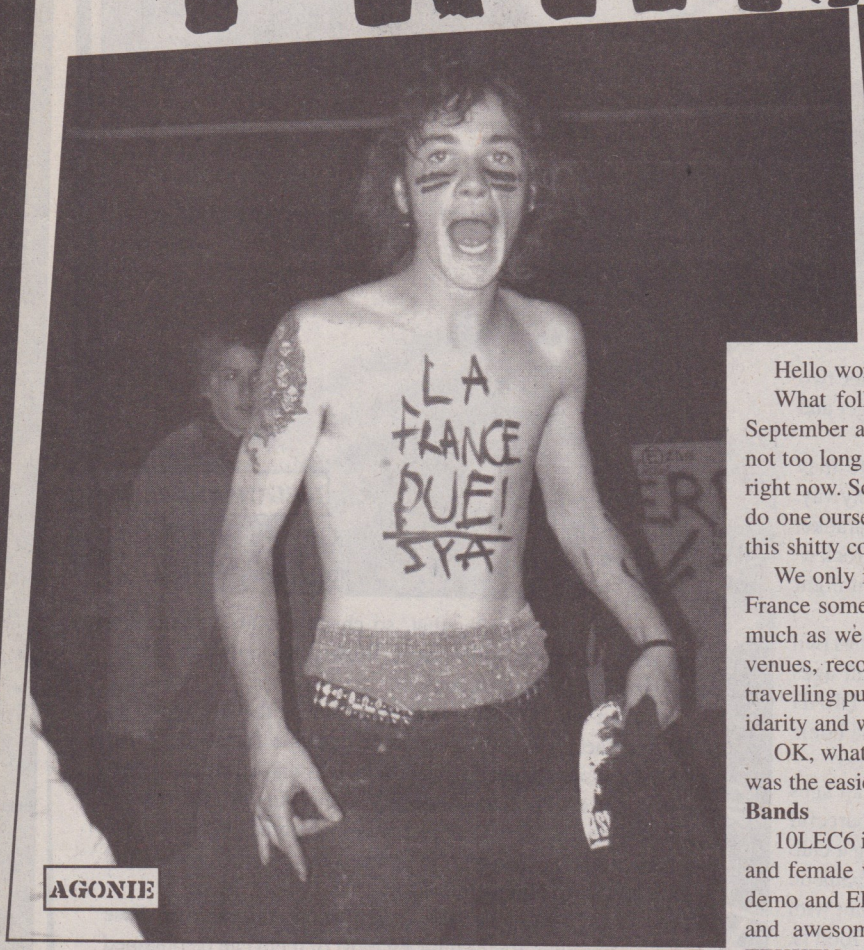
To finish this where it was started, I wanted to leave you with a quote from Biscuit that I felt summed up the scene here in town. It's taken from an interview he did with the Chronicle just days before passing away:

"I have a joy and a fever to make things happen. And it's all so simple. Just get up and go: I'll be true today. I'll do what I'm supposed to do and not take the easy way out. Do what you're supposed to do. We've got a magic place here, so use Austin for the wonderful place that it is. And go start your own band."

Written by Mike Robinson with a little bit of help from Dave Hyde. Mike is too busy playing with his guitar and eating Thai food to check his email regularly, but if anyone needs further contact info about any bands mentioned, feel free to write Dave at cheaprewards@gmail.com and maybe he can help out.

FRANCE





AGONIE

HOLY FUC KING SHIT

Hello worldwide punks.

What follows is a scene report from France completed between September and October 2005. There was another French scene report not too long ago, but we felt it was totally out of touch with the scene right now. So instead of complaining like we always do, we decided to do one ourselves and talk about what we think are the cool things in this shitty country right now.

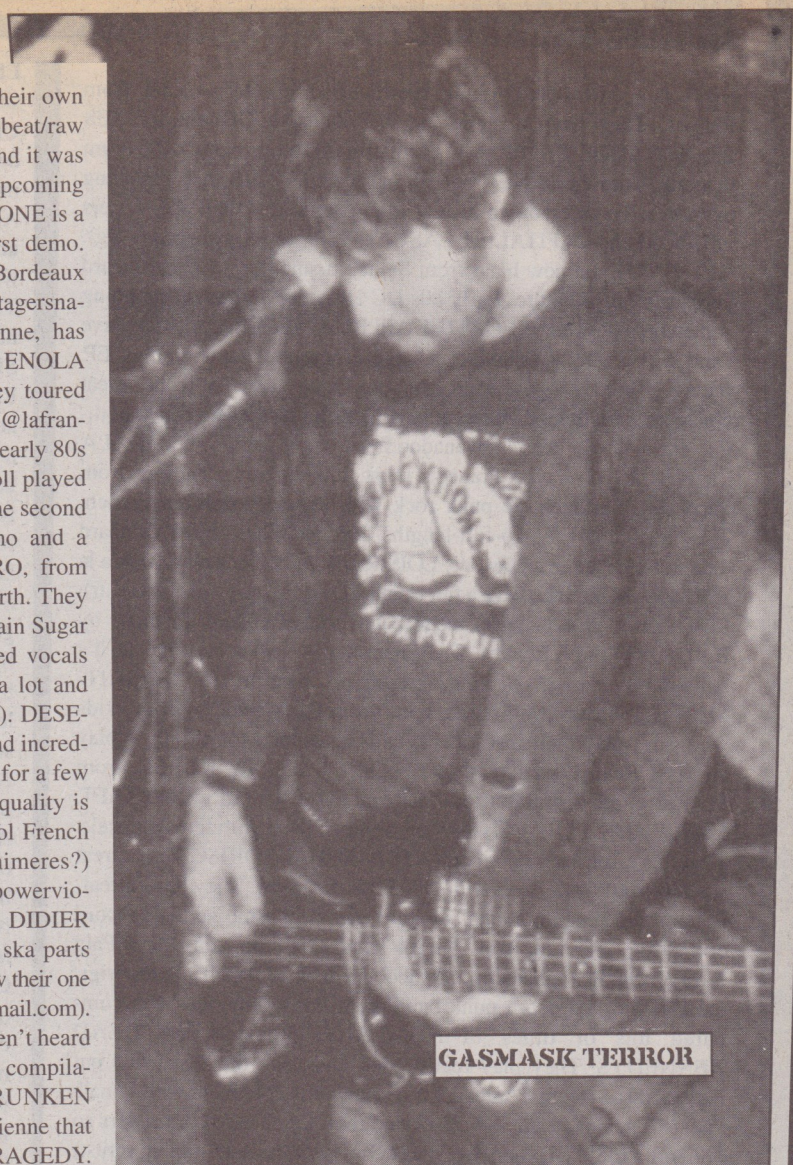
We only included bands, labels, distros, and zines. If you travel to France someday you can get in touch with us and we'll help with as much as we can: find places to sleep, vegan food, cool squats. Bars, venues, record shops, and of course some friendly punks. I mean it, travelling punks get in touch. It's important because we believe in solidarity and we say fuck all borders.

OK, what else? We included only email/internet contacts because it was the easiest thing to do. We're lazy bastards. Enjoy.

Bands

10LEC6 is a new band from Paris, with no guitar, some percussion, and female vocals. Reminds me a little of CRASS. Good live band, demo and EP out now (10lec6@10lec6.com). AGHAST is a powerful and awesome emo band from Toulouse. They have a split with TEKKEN, a split 10" with 1000 TRAVELS OF JAWAHARLAL, a CD, and a split 7" with SED NON SATIATA out, and maybe more. I saw them live and believe me, these dudes know how to rock! (tiboaghast@aol.com). AGONIE is a new crust/d-beat band with female and male vocals from the Paris area. Young, chaotic, and punk as fuck with a demo out soon. AMANDA WOODWARD is a well-known emo-punk band who toured the US not long ago. They have a bunch of records out: their demo as a 10", one 7", a split EP with 1905, two full-lengths and a discography CD (AMANDA WOODWARD, 206 Rue Caponière, 14000 Caen, France, amanda_woodward@hotmail.com). API UIZ is an old band—playing for maybe 10 years—from BDX, and play powerful jazz-core influenced by THE EX, NOMEANSNO, and LIGHTNING BOLT. They have released two LPs and appear on compilations. These dudes are crazy, especially live! (lespotagersnatures@ouvaton.org). BELLE EPOQUE is another emo band influenced by the French-emo scene from the mid-90s from the Paris area. They're more DIY than your average emo band, and are nice and honest kids. They have a great demo CD-R and a six-song LP (belle_epoque_sucks@hotmail.com). BOOTER is a noisy hardcore/punk band from Angers. They have a split EP with SHOCK

TREATMENT from Italy, as well as their own EP released on their own label (contact@booter.propagande.org). CHAOS ZZZ is a d-beat/raw punk band from Saint-Etienne. I saw them live some time ago and it was really good. They put out a demo tape a while ago, and have an upcoming EP on Kick Rock Rec (befa@lafrancepue.net). CHAROGNE STONE is a new powerviolence/thrashcore band. They just released their first demo. CHOCOLAT BILLY is an experimental jazzy/zouk band from Bordeaux with an API WIZ member. They have released an LP (lespotagersnatures@ouvaton.org). COCHE BOMBA, from Lyon/Saint-Etienne, has existed for quite some time, and have released a split LP with ENOLA GAY, some EPs, a 10", a split EP, and a discography CD. They toured South America some time ago but broke up recently (befa@lafrancepue.net). CUSTOMERS is a snotty, up-tempo, distortion-free, early 80s styled HC band. Basically it's primitive up-tempo raw rock n' roll played by a bunch of drunks. First demo out now on tape and CD-R. The second demo will be out soon, released as a package with the demo and a *Ratcharge/Rad Party* split zine (ratcharge@yahoo.fr). DAITRO, from Lyon, plays scremo/emo/hardcore and are the nicest boys on earth. They have a split LP with RAEIN from Italy and a new LP on Pure Pain Sugar (daitro@free.fr). DECOMBRES is a d-beat band with screamed vocals from Paris with a SKITYOUTH ARMY member. They play a lot and might release a demo soon (jouissezsansentraves@hotmail.com). DESECRATOR is a fast as fuck grindcore band. They're really tight and incredible live, and have played a countless number of shows in Paris for a few years. They finally released a new demo CD-R and the sound quality is great. They also have a four-way split CD with some other cool French bands and some upcoming records (LP on Chimeres?) (desecrator.13@free.fr). DHIBAC, from Nancy, plays good powerviolence/grind/metal. They have released a demo and a split 7". DIDIER GUSTIN SS is a thrash, punk, whatever-core band with some ska parts and screamed vocals. I don't think they're rehearsing now, but I saw their one and only show and it was fucking killer (jouissezsansentraves@hotmail.com). DRIE LAGEN, from Auch, plays fast HC sung in Spanish. I haven't heard them. They have a split EP and some songs on a double 7"/CD compilation of bands from Auch (DRIELAGEN@aol.com) DRUNKEN VENGEANCE BASTARDS is an awesome band from Saint-Etienne that has been compared to a mix between TURBONEGRO and TRAGEDY. Rockin' hardcore crust with melodies. They have a self-titled 7" out now on Kick Rock Records (bastard@drunkenvengeance.net). ELYSIUM is a grindcore/metal band that reminds me of DISCORDANCE AXIS. They really kick ass live! In the works is a split CD with Monarch. FACE UP TO IT! is one of my favorite bands from France. They are from Bordeaux and play old-styled hardcore punk—like a sloppier version of MINOR THREAT. Really fun live shows too. They have some demos, comp tracks and split EPs with MELEE and CRUCIAL SECTION (nightbrings@yahoo.com). FAST FOOD is a fastcore band from Saint-Etienne that sings only about food. They have a demo CD-R. FOETUS PARTY is an anarcho-punk band with a drum machine. They're from Lille/Tours and have a bunch of records out. FUAIM CATHA is a neo-crust band not unlike TRAGEDY or FROM ASHES RISE, really good at what they do, and good, political lyrics. They have an LP on Stonehenge Records (destructure@tiscali.fr). GASMASK TERRÖR is a raw punk/d-beat band from Bordeaux with members of FACE UP TO IT! and GEORGES BITCH JUNIOR. They're playing a lot, and have a demo tape as well as a 7" on Plague Bearer Records from Denmark. Some split 7"s are planned (nightbrings@yahoo.com). GEORGES BITCH JUNIOR is an awesome power violence band from Bayonne (French Basque Country), the French answer to SPAZZ, but adding their personalities to the mix. They have a demo, a one-sided LP on Chimères Records, and a split EP with Japan's QUILL. Too bad they split up few days ago (ninjatuning@aol.com). GET LOST is a new youth crew band from Paris. They're not cheesy like a lot of youth crew bands, and have a good demo



GASMASK TERROR

CD-R out now. GU GUAI XING QIU is a crazy powerviolence band with a keyboard that can be compared to THE LOCUST. They are from Nancy and have one or two albums (CDs) and a demo (ggxq@hotmail.com). GRAYHOUND is a relatively new band playing old-style hardcore punk. They remind me of a sloppier version of LIFE'S HALT. They have a good demo CD-R. GRIPPE AVIAIRE TERRÔR is sloppy as fuck, d-beat-metal-ska-core with male/female vocals. First demo—recordings of their first rehearsal—out now, limited to five copies. HANNIBAL SMITH ARMY is a new band from the Lille area. I don't know what style they play but knowing these people I'm expecting some old-styled hardcore/thrash. Nothing out at the moment (xescobarx@hotmail.com). HAYMARKET, from Nantes, plays punk rock influenced by the DEAD KENNEDYS. They have a full-length CD out now. HHM is a riot grrrl punk band from Brest. They have a demo CD-R and maybe some more stuff to come (turbobouster@hotmail.com). HOLY FUCKIN' SHIT!, from Bordeaux, started as a self-proclaimed LOS CRUDOS rip-off band, and when I saw them live they were really good at it. I've heard that now they're less CRUDOS sounding but still good, raw, fast, political, rockin' hardcore. A demo is planned for the end of the year (defectivechain@wanadoo.fr). HORDE OF ZOM-

BIES is a noisy and totally destructured grindcore band from Rennes. They have a demo and a full-length CD out. JAMES BROWN HIDE SHOW is a great grind/fastcore band with drum machine from Paris. They just put out a demo CD-R that is fucking awesome. To give you an idea of their sound, live they play covers of DOOM and CAPITALIST CASUALTIES (jbhs@propagande.org). KEN PARK is a new band from Saint-Etienne that I haven't heard yet but I really want to. Early 80s DC HC sung in French, sounding somewhere between NEGATIVE APPROACH and SOA...killer live band with a strong political message. They have an upcoming EP. KRAP NECK is a new band from the Dijon area. They play great crustcore with female vocals and some grind parts. They have nothing out yet (cecile654@wanadoo.fr or langt_ner@yahoo.fr). LA FRACTION is maybe France's most famous band. They're from Paris and play melodic punk rock with female vocals, in French. They have one EP, two full-lengths, LPs and CDs, and I've heard they were preparing a new one. LOISIRS, from Poitiers, plays emo a la SHOTMAKER. They have a full length CD out (tiger-bytone@voila.fr). LUCIDO is an evil thrash metal band from Bordeaux inspired by BATHORY and VENOM. They recorded a demo recently but it's still not out cause they're the laziest band on earth! Ha! LES SHITMEN is a whatever/noisecore band from Paris made by some kids who can't play their instruments and are usually too drunk to play anyway. Really fun live shows. LOUT SOCIETY KURSE, from Montaigu, plays brutal grind-crust and has a split LP with CRAFT. MARECHAL PUTAIN is an anarcho-punk band with female vocals. They have released one demo CD-R. MIHAI EDRISCH is a great scremo band from Lyon with DAITRO members. They have a really good full-length CD that should be in every emo-addict's record collection. A new full length CD/LP is out on Pure Pain Sugar/Alchimia (mihaiedrisch@yahoo.fr). MICROPENIS is an original sounding hardcore punk band from Paris. They've been compared lots of times to NOMEANSNO meets the DEAD KENNEDYS. They play really good and have their first CD out now. MIDAS, from Bordeaux, is a brutal crustcore band with female vocals. They have a demo CD-R and recently changed drummers so hopefully they will soon release a demo with the new line-up (crusthead@wanadoo.fr). MISSPENT YOUTH are from Paris and its suburbs and play really catchy punk-rock with some ska parts here and there. Like the DIY answer to bands on Hellcat Records. They have a great full length CD out. MONARCH is probably one of the slowest bands on earth. They play epic sludge/funeral/doom with female vocals and are really good at it. Think of BURNING WITCH, KHANATE and CORRUPTED and you'll know what to expect from them. Some of their songs are almost one hour long! They released a double-CD with only three songs on it on Throne records. They have some upcoming split with ELYSIUM, MOSS and NOOTHGRUSH. If you like sludge you'll love it (ninjatuning@aol.com). MUNDA DI MIERDO is a new band from Paris with ex-members of ACTION DIRECTE. They play some weird crustcore sung in French, complete with ska parts and blast beats. According to me, they are a great noisecore band. MYRA LEE, from Poitiers, plays emo with screamed vocals and a touch of DC punk. They have a split EP with LOISIRS and a LP on Jason R Records (myralee@free.fr). NELSON MONTFORT ORCHESTRA, from Troyes, is a power violence band with a demo CD-R out. OGM is a punk band with female vocals and a drum machine from Lille. Nothing out at the moment. OPERATION EAT SHIT is a new band from Lille paying great, in your face, DIY hardcore punk with female vocals—RAMONES meets NEGATIVE APPROACH. Their split 7" with the FUCKING CANARIES is out now and is a fucking killer record! (xescobarx@hotmail.com). PEKATRALATAK plays traditional French anarcho-punk with a drum machine, a la BERURIER NOIR. They're totally radical anarchists and never lose an occasion to open their mouths. They recently put out a split LP with URBAN BLIGHT and a split EP with TEKKEN. I think the band is dead now, or will be soon. PETRIFIE is a DIY, technical, death-metal/grindcore band with a drum machine and Fib of SKITYOUTH ARMY on vocals. Their guitarist plays like a fucking' maniac—unbelievable. POLICE CHARGED is a new band from Bordeaux with some people from HOLY FUCKIN' SHIT, GASMASK TERRÖR and FACE UP TO IT! From what I understood they play noisecore in the vein of LEBENDEN TOTEN, CONFUSE, and SHITLICKERS. *Noise not music!* (nightbrings@yahoo.com). RADIKAL SATAN is from Argentina but lives in Bordeaux now, and play weird dark tango punk. They have two full length CDs and a split LP with ANARCHASIS CLOOTS. Great and unhealthy live band (lespotagersnatures@ouvaton.org). RAVI is an emo-punk band from Caen. They have a full length CD out on CHIMERES Records. RICHARD DURN from Nancy plays crazy power violence with a keyboard, a la LOCUST. They have a full length CD-R. SAKAMERDES is a drunk punk band from Paris. Seriously, these guys and girls are wasted. They have a demo CD-R out now. SEANEWS is a band from Paris playing emo-pop punk, influenced by stuff on Dischord records. They have a demo CD-R and a full length CD if I'm not mistaken. SED NON SATIATA is a new awesome scremo band from Toulouse. They have a split 7" with AGHAST and an upcoming one sided LP on Alchimia/Pure Pain Sugar (sednonsatiata_music@hotmail.com) SICKNESS is from Auch and play brutal d-beat/eurocrust not too different than DOOM or HIATUS. They have two EPs and are on a compilation CD of bands from Auch. They also have an upcoming split LP with TINNITIS (sickness.auch@wanadoo.fr). SKITYOUTH ARMY is *fastasfuckcore*. Demo out as well as their first nine song EP on CHIMERES RECORDS; Ex-DISYOUTH ARMY (skityoutharmy@hotmail.com). SUBMERGE is a technical, metal, hardcore band. They have a bunch of records out, too many to mention now and I don't remember all of them (burn.out@wanadoo.fr). TROUBLE EVERYDAY, from Nantes, is doing some old-school melodic hardcore punk a la KID DYNAMITE. They have a demo CD-R out now. TEKKEN, from Toulouse, is a funny grindcore/hardcore band, who puts out millions of split tapes in lots of different countries. Their goal is to have more releases than AGATHOCLES! Most recently they have some split EPs with PARKINSON and PEKATRALATAK, and a live split tape with GASMASK TERRÖR is in the works (david.weewee@laposte.net). VIOLENT PACIFICATION, from Montbéliard, plays a mix of NYHC, INFEST, and old 80s Boston hardcore/crossover. They remind me of MUNICIPAL WASTE a lot. They maybe have a demo or something out but I'm not sure. VÖMIT FOR BREAKFAST, from Saint-Etienne, is a really cool grindcore/crust band. They have some EPs, split EPs, and tapes out (befa@lafrancepue.net). WARCORPSE, from Brest, plays grind-stenchcore. I don't know if they put out something or not. YACINTH is a new political scremo band with an ex-DEAD FOR A MINUTE. I never heard them but some friends told me that their music is similar to ORCHID. Their motto is "your emotions are nothing but politic," so they seem to have a lot to say/scream and they're politically active dudes. They have an upcoming 7" on Alchimia and planned to release a LP on Stonehenge (hyacinth_diy@yahoo.fr). YOUSSOUF TODAY is a new thrashcore/hardcore band from Rouen. Sounds like a mix between DS-13 and LIMP WRIST—really awesome. They have a demo tape and a great EP on EMERGENCE records.

Labels/Distros

Alchimia is a cool DIY label from Lyon that has released a lot of French emo records. They have released records from OVER-

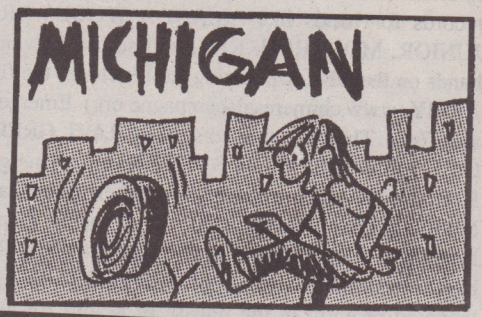
MARS, DAITRO, MIHAI EDRISCH and have a YACINTH 7" and SED NON SATIATA one-sided LP in the works (alchimia.inc@free.fr). Au Fond de L'impasse is a new distro from Toulouse, that carries many good records—mostly thrashcore and old-style hardcore (www.brutaletrousse.free.fr). Burn Out is maybe the biggest French distro. You'll find everything in his list, from crust to thrash to metal to anarcho-punk to emo and everything in-between. Phil also does Shogun Records and plays guitar in SUBMERGE (www.burnoutzine.net). Chimeres is a cool label that has released records for bands like AMANDA WOODWARD, GEORGES BITCH JUNIOR, MONARCH, RAVI and so on. Sylvain also do t-shirts of the bands on the label. Upcoming stuff includes the first EP by SKITYOUTH ARMY (www.chimeresalacampagne.org). Emergence is another cool label and distro. They've released stuff by RAVI, GREEN BERET, ELECTROCUTION and YOUSSOUF TODAY (www.emergencerecords.fr.st). Jason R is a label and big distro. The label has released stuff by TEKKEN, MYRA LEE, OHARU and more (perso.wanadoo.fr/jasonr). Kawaii Records is a new label that is doing some CD-Rs of mostly youth crew bands, released the discography CD of THE GEEKS from Korea, and participated recently in the release of a split EP with some fastcore bands whose names I can't remember. Kick Rock is a new label from Saint-Etienne. So far Befa only put out the DRUNKEN VENGEANCE BASTARDS EP, but he's planning some other EPs by CHAOS ZZZ (www.lafrancepue.net). Kid For Life is a label from Lille. Ben released the debut EP by Belgium's REPROACH, as well as some tapes and CD-Rs by bands like FRANKIE HILL, JACKSTONE, and so on (xescobarx@hotmail.com). Les Nains Aussi is a label from Grenoble that released and co-released loads of cool stuff by foreign bands like MIGRA VIOLENTA, GENERACION PERDIDA, DONA MALDAD and so on, and is also a cool distro. Les Potagers Natures is a DIY label/distro from BDX involved in the experimental/jazzcore scene. They released some stuff from RADIKAL SATAN, API WUIZ, CHOCOLABILLY, and others. Passionate and crazy people that deserve to be supported! Maloka is an anarcho-punk label and huge, cheap distro. Their catalogue is really large. Murder records, from Bordeaux, has released a bunch of cool records: fastcore, power violence, grindcore, you name it. Stuff by VÖMIT FOR BREAKFAST, MESRINE, FACE UP TO IT!, and a lot more. Olivier stopped all his activities recently so the label and the distro are now dead. Pure Pain Sugar is a great and well-known label from Lyon. He's released records by ENVY, OVERMARS, AGHAST, AMANDA WOODWARD, YAGE and a lot more. Ratbone is a label from Bordeaux and has released the JEAN SEBERG EP, CRUCIAL SECTION/FACE UP TO IT! split EP, MELEE/FACE UP TO IT! split EP, HHH discography double-CD, DAYMARE EP, and is now preparing the HEIMATLOS discography double-CD (nightbrings@yahoo.com). Stonehenge is a great anarcho/punk/hardcore label from Bordeaux. He released lots of great records and has a really cool distro—really huge and lots of good stuff *[including* MRR*! –ed.]*. Recently put out records by EKKAIA, BALLAST, FUAIM CATHA, 1905, SUBMISSION HOLD and others. A new 7" from PHOENIX FOUNDATION (from Finland) is out and others releases are planned (www.stonehengerecords.com). UNDISLESSED is a noisy, grind, crust label from Bordeaux. Huge and really cool distro, and has released a countless number of records by international bands: STRAIGHT DEGE KEGGER, MIDAS and DYSSISTEMA. Weewee is a cool label from Toulouse, Paris. They have released lots of records including the TEKKEN/PEKATRALATAK split EP, and are doing the SKITYOUTH ARMY EP with Chimeres.

Zines

Abstraction zine's latest issue is a split with *Inertie*. Full size, with interviews, columns, reviews, and so on. *Au Fond de l'Impasse* is a new cut-and-paste, handwritten zine from Toulouse. One issue out, with record reviews and personal columns. *Bavardages* is a long-running, personal, anarcho-feminist zine from Saint-Etienne. Last issue was a split with *Full of Shit*. I think Elsa wants to make an issue in English sooner or later. *Contre-Culture* is the zine of the anarcho-punk federation in France. A bunch of issues out, maybe five or six, dealing with political bands, political articles, reviews and so on. *Dimwitt* is a cool zine done by the bassist of KRAP NECK. Issue four should be out soon. *Earquake* is, as far as I know, France's longest-running punk zine. Half-size, with interviews, news, zine and record reviews. Now in its 80th or so issue. *Heartbeat* is a new personal zine, pocket sized, and really awesome—one issue out. *Inertie* is a political hardcore punk zine. Latest issue was a split with *Abstraction* and had interviews with URO and I SHOT CYRUS, among others. *Kängnäve* is a cool one-page zine that focuses on d-beat/crust worldwide. Issue two has been out for a while and issue three is in the works right now and should be a little bigger. The zine is in English (nightbrings@yahoo.com). *Life Is Wacky* is a new personal zine from Lyon. Issue number one was really good and two should be out soon. *Mes Mots Ont la Parole* is a zine from Bordeaux done by HOLY FUCKIN' SHIT!'s drummer. Focuses primarily on the local scene. Lots of cool articles, interviews, drawings and so on—all in French with a simple and fresh tone of voice. *Mononoke* is a zine dealing with worldwide hardcore/punk, lots of different styles covered, international, straight edge and political. Also has articles about Japanese comics and movies. *Perspective* is one of the few French zines in English. Two issues and the third one is a split with *Ratcharge*. The second has interviews with SUNPOWER, 21 ENEMY, DISYOUTH ARMY, Murder Records, as well as columns and reviews. *Pizza with Cheese* is another French zine in English. Two issues out, dealing mostly with fastcore/thrash/old-style hardcore; the latest one has SCHOLASTIC DETH, THE RITES, Gloom Records and so on. *Plus Loin Que le Bout de Son Nez* is a zine from Lille with four issues out, cut-and-paste and old-style hardcore. Cool. *Rad Party* is a long-running pocket-sized zine and one of my favorites from France. Handwritten, with lots of cool drawings, personal stories, and reviews of all styles of HC and punk. Great. *Ratcharge* is a cut-and-paste mess full of nonsense and punk shit. Issue four is out now and is a split with *Perspective* zine. *Ratcharge* side is in French but *Perspective* in English. Issue five will be a split with *Rad Party*, and issue six will be in English (ratcharge@yahoo.fr). *Ravensdome* is a new zine done by the singer of GASMASK TERRÖR. One issue out, the second is in the works. Cool personal zine of black-metal and cut-and-paste artwork (xolivierx@hotmail.com). *Slingshot* is a cool new anarcho-punk zine from Paris. Lots of crust/d-beat reviews, lots of articles, and interviews with bands like TWISTED SYSTEM or EASPA MEASA. Two issues out. *Tord Boyau* is a zine all about bikes. Cool stuff. One issue out. *Wall Street Destroy* is a cut-and-paste, messy zine from Paris. Three or four issues out with *loooots* of stuff; interviews in both French and English. Cool. I don't know if there will be a new issue or not. *Weewee* is the zine of the guys doing the label of the same name. Last issue was a split with *In Dust We Trust*. *We're Gonna Fight* is a zine in English. International, political, vegan, straightedge, and the latest issue was a South American special. Cool shit. *Worlds at War* is the new name for *In Dust We Trust*. The idea is to change the name for every issue. Great zine done by an old scenester. In it you'll find personal stuff, interviews, and reviews in a sarcastic and critical tone of voice.

This scene report was done by Alex (ratcharge@yahoo.fr) and Fibro (defectivechain@wanadoo.fr). We know we forgot a lot of information but we're not sorry; we did our best. Thanks for reading! Support your scene! Stay punk!

MICHIGAN



STATE

Greetings from the desk of Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm. Not only is Michigan a winter wonderland of fun, summer boating on our great lakes, and the capitol of garage rock (RIP), but we also host a plethora of unique and inspired hardcore punk bands that have a lot of moxie!

Please understand that as the governor of Michigan I have a lot on my plate so I cannot possibly know about or mention every punk band in the state, but I am going to try and give you a good idea about some of my favorite DIY hardcore punk and crust bands that play out on a regular basis, put on shows, and generally work hard at delivering real uncompromising and unmarketable punk to a seedy underworld. Let me also say that it is my belief that if any one of these bands were from NY, Portland, or the Bay Area they would immediately be the new *MRR* pin ups with Epitaph waiting eagerly in the wings to snatch them up and effectively destroy any and all of there DIY credibility. But they are not from any of the aforementioned towns so they shall continue to toil in obscurity overlooked because they dwell in the forgotten rustbelt of America, which is fine with us because we generally like our punk rock stark, bleak, real, and non-glossy.

Lets start out with our veterans. Ann Arbor, MI is the home of the legendary STATE. Art the guitar player (49) started the band in 1978 but don't let that fool you, these guys play a pure and blistering hardcore that is often imitated but never duplicated. The singer Preston is also 49, and along with drummer Keir, and bassist Jeff (who are both 39), this is pretty much the original line up. These geezers have not lost a thing over the past 26 years. There legendary 7" *No Illusions* has been reissued/booted a couple of times with the most recent repressing on HAVOC. GTA is doing a 74 minute long anthology disc and the band is hoping to release some of there new material soon. You can check out some live recordings at www.localchaos.org, and you can contact the band at statenoillusions@aol.com

Another hardcore punk legend from Detroit is Lacy (43) formerly of SON OF SAM (see *MRR* #36 May '86). His newer project, the HILLSIDE STRANGLERS have been kicking around since 1989. They have several self-released records, tapes, and CDs, and have toured Europe several times. Featuring Wally of Screaming Bloody Leper Children on guitar, these guys rip out a most unique and unholy noise that seems to get attention and respect everywhere they play. Lacy is also known to book some great touring acts on the occasion. Contact Lacy at detroitnoise.com and lacy1217@detroitnoise.com

Speaking of old and ugly, another bunch of geezer assholes are PUB LIFE, who have been playing out for the past three years or so. They feature some semi-notable older punks; Paul Sinn (40) the bass player is formerly of SON OF SAM (see above) as well as former members of SOCIAL OUTCAST and the HILLSIDE STRANGLERS. The new drummer has jammed with DEE DEE RAMONE among others. They have a brutal early 80s UK

punk & Oi thing going on with hateful, sarcastic, and hilarious lyrics lambasting rock stars, hippies, and sell-outs—think CHAOS UK/PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES. They have a self-released CD out called *Fueled by Hate*, which features grindcore legend Dave Grave of REPULSION on drums. Oh yeah, these guys create elaborately drawn flyers. The one that got the most attention featured Detroit garage rock darlings the WHITE STRIPES decapitated! Rumor has it they might be mentioned in the upcoming garage rock documentary *It Came From Detroit,* which will be funnier than Spinal Tap if it gets released. They also put on a big punk show every summer called Deviate Detroit featuring ten or more local DIY punk bands—it's a real hootenanny! (www.publifedetroit.com)

The DEAD HEROES have been at it for a long time now; they play fast and super tight punk that reminds me of GBH meets MOTÖRHEAD. They have played the local stage at the Warped Tour several times and always manage to be featured as an opener for the biggest touring punk acts. It is rumored that their boyishly handsome drummer Dougie is being considered to play the part of Richie Cunningham in an upcoming *Happy Days* remake. They have a CD distributed by Cargo called *Let it Ride*, which features a cover of Detroit Punk über legends HERESY (not UK), which I have been told is a proper tribute to that late great band. Contact Cargo for more info. Which reminds me— the rumor mill is churning out a tale of a possible HERESY (US) reunion featuring a later line up?

Now onto some of the young bloods that have been churning out some blistering, politically charged DIY grind, crust, and thrash. OK, what has eight arms, eight legs and fourteen eyes? Why, the four-eyed foursome PIRATE LAW of course. These guys play a mutant strain of super tight political thrash that makes me think of DISKONTO with a dash of FLUX OF PINK INDIANS and a smidgen of REPULSION. They have a demo tape out called *Yaarmaggedon!* Side one is studio tracks and side two is an excellent live recording. These guys recently opened up for RIISTETYT. Tim the bass player, formerly of FEAST OR FAMINE, does kick ass tattoo work and has begun work on a new zine, called *Blood & Spikes.* Expect full on D-Beat, crust, and grind from this zine w/o the usual Punk Core well coifed pin up punks. Contact them at: 13121 Klinger St. Detroit MI 48212, or daggerskill@yahoo.com.

VIVISUK is relatively new to the scene and play crusty charged punk with male and female vocals that reminds me a bit of ANTISCHISM. They have a 7" out called *U.S. Disastwhore* on Bacon Towne Records. They are a great bunch and I cannot wait to see them evolve. (www.upthefucklngplgs.com.)

Next up is RANDOM AXE OF TERROR, who were neighbors of mine in the capitol city of Lansing before they moved to the Polish city within Detroit called Hamtramck. These Ham-town thrashers play blisteringly fast and seem to have a blatant disregard for music in general, Eric the singer is so shrill that dogs all over the city can be heard howling in unison as if he is their lord calling them to join him in a night prowl. Eric is also working on a sweet-ass dread mullet, just as a shrill dog lord should. Jack the guitar player and his girlfriend Sue just had a baby; it is said that the baby cries whenever Eric enters the room. These guys have a raw as fuck demo tape that has sold out and is no longer available because one of the dogs in the pack pissed on the master or something like that. Contact them at: 13133 Klinger, Detroit, MI 48212 or crowd_control_@hotmail.com. They would love to destroy your Midwest basement.

A frighteningly powerful hardcore band from Detroit is H8 INC. These guys are not your typical chugga chugga, punk foo, hoodie hardcore. They seem to draw influences from almost every era of punk and hardcore from around the world. Sometimes going right over the heads of the minions who show up in there new sneakers to do the wrecking ball. Featuring Jeff G. of COLD AS LIFE, and former members of MALUCOS and W/O WARNING. These guys tear it up, reminding me at times of INFEST or LÄRM. They have two CDs available that have been distributed world wide, the newest release features a track with John Brannon of NEGATIVE APPROACH on vocals. Breaking news is that for various reasons the majority of the band have left and Beast the lead singer and Jeff G. are now being backed by hardcore supper heroes THE DOGS OF WAR. Contact them at: H8INCdetroit@hotmail.com or www.h8inc.com or www.myspace.com/h8inc

DEATH IN CUSTODY plays a real puritanical old school hardcore that seems to avoid the usual Biohazard trappings. These guys are pretty much known to about every fucker in Detroit. Although they have not played out as much lately, they seem to end up on a very eclectic variety of shows, These guys are very cool and play with crust bands, punk bands, etc. as long as its real DIY hardcore and punk these guys are in on it. Ralph the lead singer is practically a sex symbol in the scene and you can hear people scream like teenage girls as he graces the stage with agility and flair. Contact them at deathincustody@hotmail.com or www.deathincustody.com

MRR's new pin up darlings the BILL BONDSMAN have been grinding out a fantastic blend of hardcore that reminds me of a cross between NEGATIVE APPROACH and GAUZE, if you can imagine that. It is a little known fact that Tony the vocalist posed for the Gerber baby logo

as an infant. The bass player Rob and Guitarist Amado are not only the nicest guys around as well as badass skaters, but they also play with Detroit punk/wrestling super group The BUMPINUGLYS. I will get to that shortly. The BILL BONDSMAN have a 7" out that Tony is quick to remind you appeared on ten different top ten lists in *MaximumRocknRoll*. Yes Tony, we all know how super fantastic you are. Contact them at www.existentialista.corn/bbm/bbm.htm

Now onto the BUMPINUGLYS. These guys play a catchy, hook-laden punk rock that is squeaky tight. Here is the kicker: in the middle of their set, a virtual WWE battle royale erupts in the audience; new comers caught unawares have been seen wetting themselves in confusion. They just celebrated their ten- year anniversary with two LPs, three broken down vans, and 75 stitches under their belt. Sorry no contact info.

Bubba from the BUMPINUGLYS has a side project with Joey from W/O WARNING and Jeff G. from COLD AS LIFE called THE BLOOD AND THE BEER. These guys are fucking heavy sounding—without a category to throw them into I would just have to say that they are one of my new local favorites. Joey, the vocalist, is a lovable gallute that, like the Frankenstein monster, just wants to be loved yet is widely misunderstood. Contact them at drinktickets@aol.com

Well as the Governor of MI, I am happy to tell you about this next band that exemplifies my goals of racial harmony for the city of Detroit: THE RATFINKS are the most ethnically diverse Oi band since the Templars. These young hooligans play a fuzzy, brutal street punk with vocals that remind me of a thousand Orcs in agony; ironically the lead singer Guy looks like Shrek. These Neanderthals don't give a shit and often time they are showered with beer bottles while they play, which has made it difficult for them to find places that will book them. Phil the drummer as been incarcerated a few times and Ben the pint-sized Latino guitarist has been in rehab for alcohol abuse. All this and there only like twelve or something. These guys are un-fucking-believable. Contacts them via www.theratfinks.com

NEW CRIME ICONS are from Kalamazoo and play a raw strain of American hardcore that makes me think of BAZOOKA JOE. My favorite part of this band is the very well-written lyrics that are political without being typical. Check out there new self titled 7" on Don't Fuck Around Records. Contact them at: 7649 South Indian Lake Dr. Vicksburg, MI 49097

UPSTARTS R.F. hail from Grand Rapids, MI and have been compared to ABRASIVE WHEELS meets BROKEN BONES. They feature street punk songs about drinking and socio-economic disorder. They have two demos that have sold out and they recently opened for DEFIANCE. Contact Jeremy at skintpunx77@aol.com

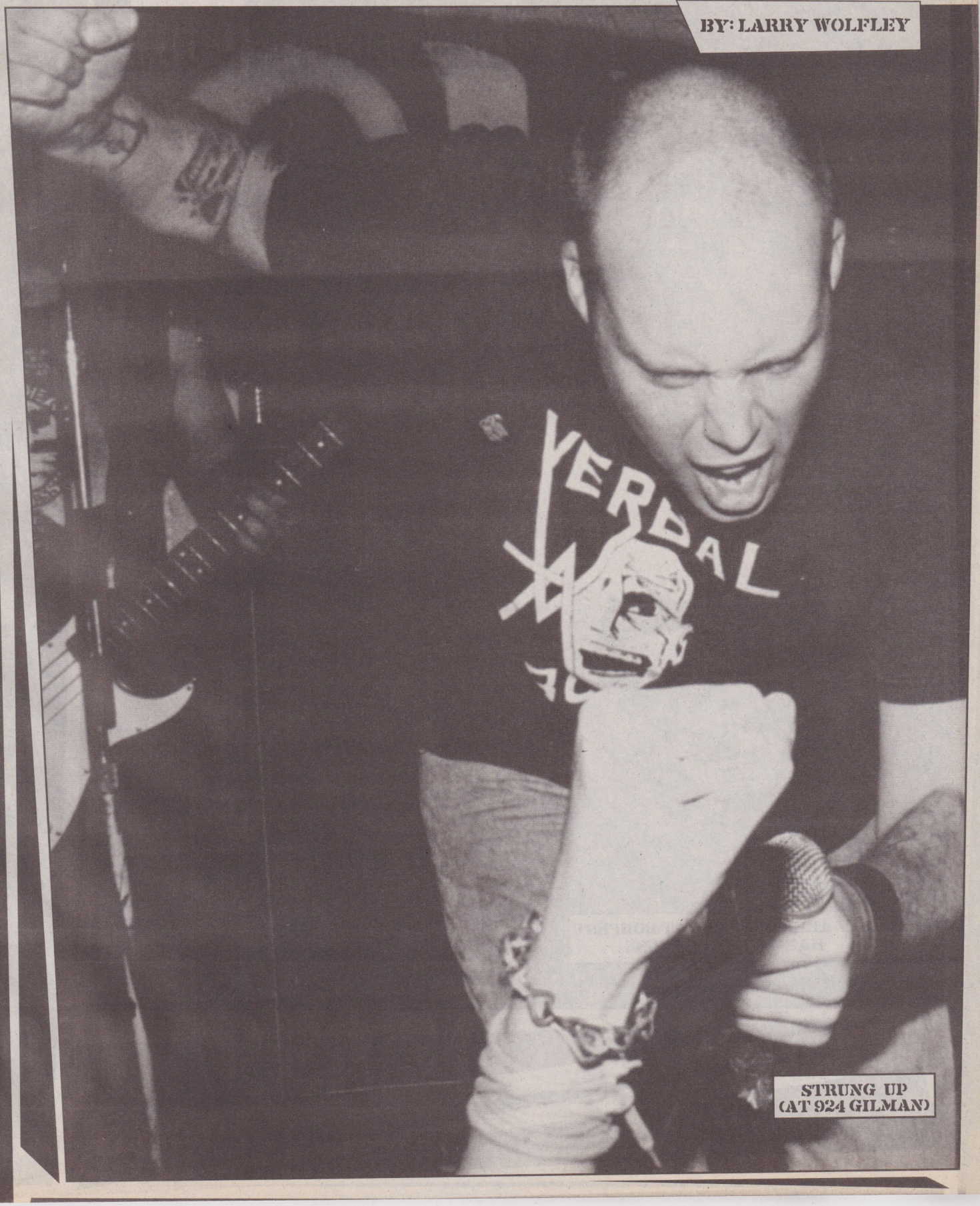
Flesh Wave fanzine #1 just came out and it comes with a comp tape just like the old days. The tape includes unreleased songs from the BILL BONDSMAN and PUB LIFE; it also features DEATH IN CUSTODY, GODDAMN, and I ACCUSE. The zine has an interview with the BILL BONDSMAN and is loaded with art and other shit. Mike the editor is working on issue #2, which will have an interview with local punk flyer artist Outcast among other interviews art and cool shit. Contact Mike at *Flesh Wave* 21620 Hoffman, St. Clair Shores, MI 48082 or fleshwave@hotmail.com

The Ann Arbor punks have been putting out a zine for a while called *Bad Ideas* put together by the folks who live at the Bad Idea house. #5 is out now with tons of comics, food, politics, music and more. They also put on shows and raise trouble. Contact them at: 807 N. Main St. Ann Arbor, MI 48104 ph# 734-327-3783 or thisbadidea@yahoo.com

Well, that's about it fuckers! I'm sure I forgot something or somebody but damn, this wasn't easy. You give it a try crybaby. DIY or DIE. Love, Governor Jennifer Granholm.

BAY AREA SCENE PHOTOS

BY: LARRY WOLFLEY



STRUNG UP
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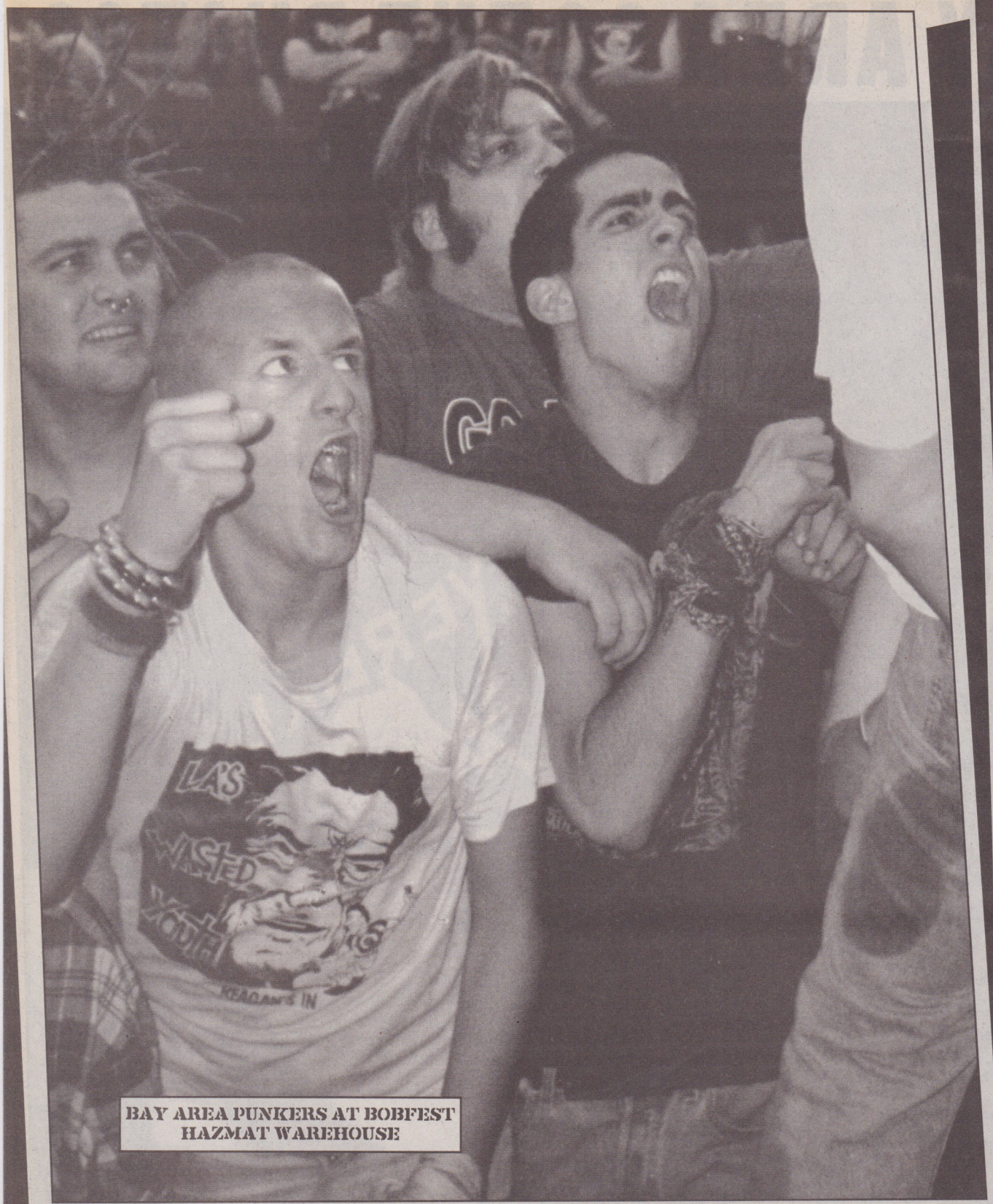
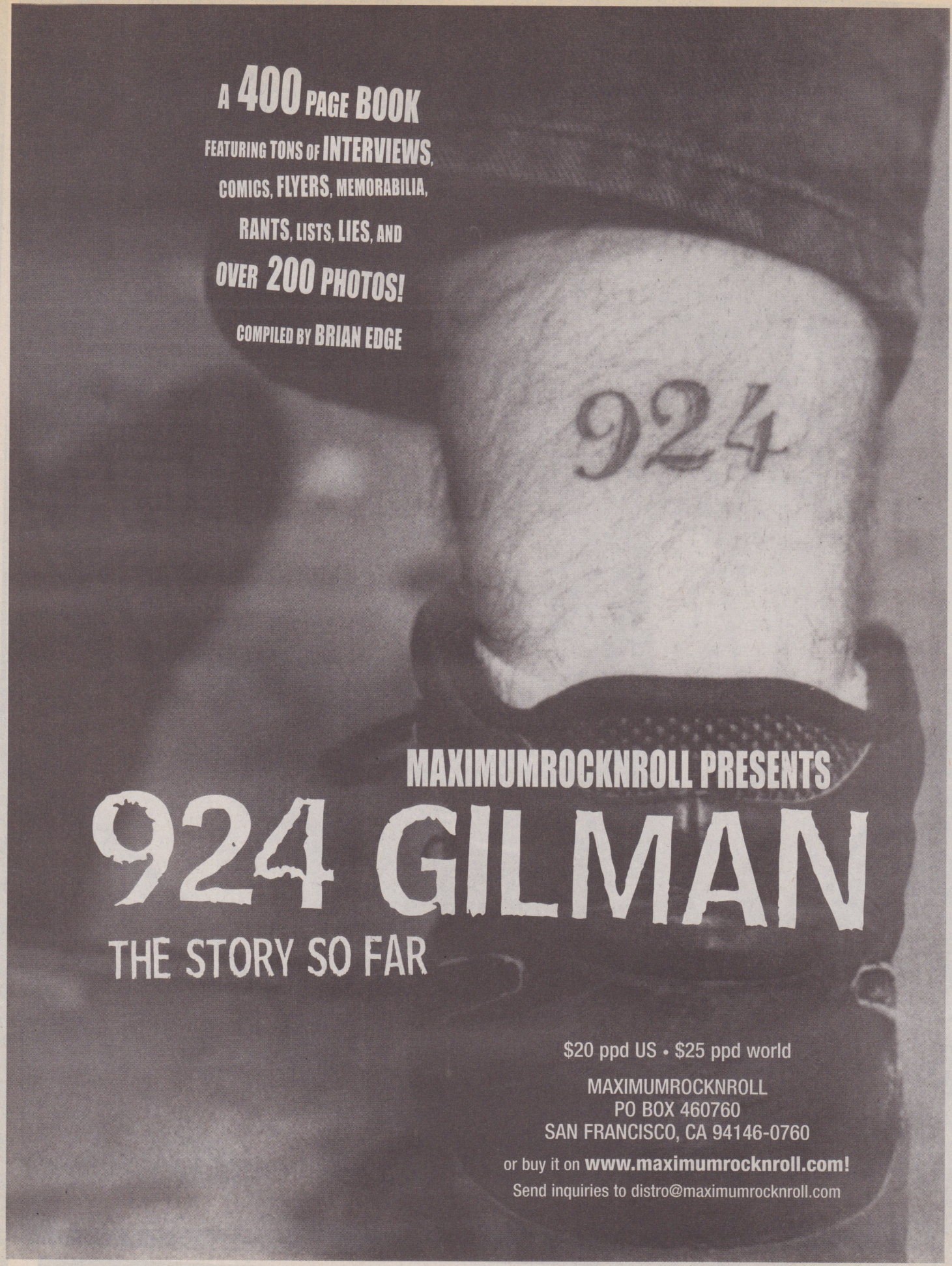


BAY AREA PUNKERS AT BOBFEST
HAZMAT WAREHOUSE

ROTTEN FUX
AT BURNT RAMEN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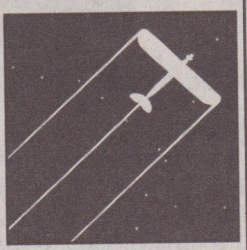

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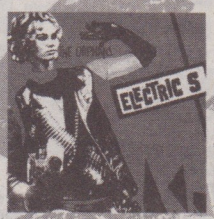

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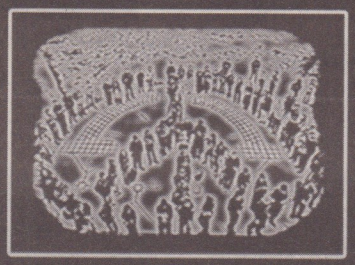

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I remember being totally blown away after seeing one of the first Let's Grow gigs ever in Belgrade (Serbia) back in 2001. Now more than four years later Vitamin X (my band) happened to tour the Balkans, so I got another opportunity to sing along with those kids and enjoy their and energetic and honest live performance. Let's Grow is without doubt one of the best European hardcore outfits at this moment and their *Neverending Story* 7" is one of my favorite records from last year. So let's see howthese kids will have their say.

Interview by Marko Korac

MRR: So give us a little history of Let's Grow, and also who is doing what in the band?
Biza: Let's Grow started in late 2000. Dario and I had an idea to make Let's Grow, a band which would have a direct message fueled by aggressive and fast hardcore tunes. In the beginning, we sounded like some of the youth crew bands that at that time we were influenced by. As years went by, we changed a few band members and also our music style. We're now a bit faster and the songs are more influenced by early 80s hardcore punk vibes. Actually the song structures are a lot more different, but that's just my opinion.
Lets Grow is: Dario-Vocals, Ljuba-guitar, Biza-2nd guitar, Mare-bass, Ognjen-drums

MRR: How would you label yourself: as a punk band, straight edge band, thrash, crust, or just a hardcore punk band?
Dario: Just hardcore punk.
Biza: I would label Let's Grow as a fast/aggressive hardcore band, with thrash and 80s style influences. I think we've progressed with our music since our beginning, and I am pretty satisfied how our music is evolving.

MRR: What are the bands' biggest musical and lyrical influences?
Dario: It's hard to say that we are under the direct influence of some specific bands. We all listen to different kinds of music and different styles of punk/hardcore, from P.T.T.B. and Blitz, thru FU's, Zero Boys and Necros, then Youth Of Today and RKL, to Lack of Interest. Then again, you can not say that we sound like all of these bands, right? When we started, we decided to play fast and angry hardcore punk and that's what we do. Each one of our songs is a product of our feelings at that moment. The biggest influences on the lyrics are our own lives.
Biza: When I started going to shows and getting involved in the HC/punk scene, I was under the influence of '88 youth crew bands, such as Youth of Today, Wide Awake, Uniform Choice, Chain of Strength, etc. So, Let's Grow was a product of what influenced us at that time. The biggest ever influences on Let's Grow, in my opinion, were Infest, Manliftingbanner, Negative Approach, Youth of Today, Minor Threat, early Mainstrike etc. At the same, all of those bands' lyrics had an influence on our lives, through some straight edge topics and various political issues.

MRR: You guys are all from Belgrade (Serbia and Montenegro). How is the scene over there?
Dario: I think that there have never been so many people as there are now. Shows have never been so frequent but I still don't like what's going on. The quantity has advanced more then the quality. Kids are pretty unconcerned and very passive. Sometimes, the crowds can really be big but there are always many new faces. Some people disappear very fast. With this, you can't have a quality scene. I must believe that this will change, because now we have a lot of foreign bands coming to Serbia to play. There are a lot of those "big" bands from the major labels that sell out the shows and I think a lot of kids will very soon understand some things.
Biza: I would like to see some band that plays 80s HC style. There is a lot of metal/newschool type of bands here as there are also Fat Records style melodic punk bands. I would like to mention some quality hardcore/punk Serbian bands such as Unison, Heavenshore, and 36 Daggers…
Ljuba: Maybe there are a lot of new kids, but it is like they are all into some metal or MTV shit. I couldn't care less about it, if they are not all calling it hardcore. There are always people who come and go really fast, and we're all used to that. The problem is that it seems like less and less people are getting what it's all about. It's been like that for quite a while and it doesn't look like it's gonna be better soon.

MRR: How difficult is it for you guys (or any other Serbian band) to play outside of the country or do tours?
Dario: It's easy to play in the ex-Yugoslavian countries, but Europe—that's something else. We want to tour Europe where there will be people who have never heard of us. We also want to tour with an LP, not with just two EPs. But I think it will be hard. The Serbian passport is worth as much as toilet paper because with it you can only go to some Balkan countries. If you wanna go somewhere further, you need visas but for the EU countries it is so fuckin' hard to get it. You need a batch of papers and a lot of luck to get a visa.
Biza: We're like a bird in a cage—you think you can fly and when you try to you just realize that you can't get out. You're locked in.
Ljuba: We live in Serbia, and our financial situation is not so great. We don't have the financial support to just go to Europe and see what happens. As Dario has said, the biggest problem is that we need visas for the EU (and the rest of the world). Maybe it is not so hard to get them, but it is a long, complicated and time-consuming procedure. You need a bunch of documents, invitation letters, you need extra money, and you have to wait in lines for hours to get it. You can tour Europe, but only if you're willing to go through all the procedures, and spend all that money, and then you better wait for the right moment to do it, and get the most out of it. That's why we're waiting for our LP to be out first.

MRR: You guys are definitely involved in politics, so what's your opinion on the current political situation in Serbia? Is it better now or in the time of Milosevic?
Dario: If you are over eighteen, live in the Balkans and don't know shit about politics, then something's wrong with you. Everything's better here than living under Milosevic. The situation in the country is still fucked up. This new (second after Milosevics') government is incapable. People are very disappointed because they expected a lot from the "revolution." The state economy still doesn't work. We still have problems with Kosovo, problems with the union of Serbia and Montenegro, but now we are not in wars on four fronts anymore. We don't have sanctions or the embargo and nobody is bombing us. There's less crime than years ago (at least I hope so). But the wounds that we received, we will be curing for decades to come.
Biza: Politicians are all the same for me. They just need our votes on elections, democracy on paper, and nothing better happens after but empty slogans.
Ljuba: It's definitely better now, but we sank so deep, that I don't believe that we'll ever get up again and live normally here in Serbia.

MRR: Do you think that entering the European Union would bring prosperity to Serbia and Montenegro, or that you'll just become another country with cheap labor to be used for big western corporations?
Dario: I don't believe that we will enter the EU because it will disappear before we will ever be capable of joining it. Next, I think that the African, Asian, and South American countries are exploited even if they're not in the EU. Then the Serbian banks, factories, mines, and water wells are being sold out even though we are not in the European Union. So, because of that, I don't at all fear entering the EU. The European Union will not accept everyone just because they geographically belong in Europe. To be a part of the EU, you need to fulfill some standards. Because we are a country that is so far behind the "European standards" and because it seems that we are not able to change ourselves for the better, someone must do that for us. We will never arrest the war criminals if we are not threatened. We still live on the foundations of fake communism. There are still people who manage national/publicly owned companies and are not responsible for their mistakes.
If you ask the people in eastern Europe: "Do you want to enter the EU?" almost everyone would vote "yes" but when you ask them again, six to seven years later, when they are in it, there is a big chance that you'll have more than half of them that will say "no" because when you reach the standard to get into the EU then you don't need the EU anymore.
Biza: I think that entering the European Union would bring even a greater separation between the rich and the poor people and that will show through the years. We already are cheap labor so that is not anything new to us. I think that most of the people want to get the chance to travel without visas and to work in good conditions and environments. Personally, I don't care so much about the EU. I just wanna feel free right now; I don't think I feel that way. This is a fucked up country and the first thing I would like to do is to change some people's minds that have been poisoned with things that keep pulling us back through the years, over and over again..

MRR: Where do you see the real end of the Kosovo crisis?
Dario: Who would know that? I don't see any bright future.
Biza: I think that Kosovo will become an independent country and it will last for some time and after that Kosovo will join Albania—that is just my opinion.
Ljuba: To be honest I don't see it. It's not just Kosovo, it's the whole region, it's not calm in Macedonia either, and I don't want to even think of what could happen down there.

MRR: How badly did the NATO bombing effect the economy, environment, and people in Serbia?
Dario: I'm not a politician, not even an economist, but I don't believe it affected it that much. The economy was fucked up long before the NATO bombing and it is still being ruined, six years later. Its effect was more on the people. They are now more skeptical towards the world and they are still closed in within their nationalism. All those right wing politicians use the NATO bombing to scare people and to gain points. You have a man that destroyed our lives, then we survive a few wars and the sanctions, and then someone bombs you to save you. Bullshit! If they were bombing us to stop the conflicts in Kosovo, why were they bombing civil factories, bridges, and even hospitals in Serbia?
Biza: I think some people are more aggressive and desperate. Some of them in a way feel better by thinking about some hope and prosperity and some still feel the same.
Ljuba: I think that it mostly affected the environment, but I don't know that much about it, I am not informed enough to be able to talk about it.

MRR: It seems that after a few years of peace, the political relationship between Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia is getting better, or do you think that that is also related to the people in those countries?
Dario: The situation is far from being good but it is much better than ten years ago when the war was over, but it must be that way. We must live normal lives. We all live in the same region, speak almost the same language, we face the same political problems, such as accepting our mistakes from the past, busting the war criminals, entering the EU.
Ljuba: It's related to both. First of all, we don't need visas for Croatia anymore, nor do they for Serbia, and that's an important step towards living together. A lot of people are still afraid to go to Croatia, but still, those who aren't can easily go there. And more and more people are doing so, whether it is to visit relatives, to see Croatia, or just go on vacation.

MRR: Is nationalism still on the rise in ex-Yugoslavian countries, or did "certain people" finally realize that it gets them nowhere?
Dario: Do you think that nationalism can become any bigger than when the war was on?! No, but it's still very big. People here are very proud, even if they sometimes don't have so many reasons to be so; they change very slowly. Years and years must pass before we will be able to say that everything is totally normal. I really understand how it is when you have lost someone or something in the war, but life goes on. You must forgive but not forget.

MRR: Some of your songs criticize organized religion and conservative ways of thinking that are forced upon people, for example pro-life ideas which are dealt with in the song "Mass Question." Is the rise of religious power in Serbia something that emerged in conjunction with nationalism and war propaganda?
Dario: When you survive such terrible things as several wars in a couple of years; when you lose the dearest people to you or get expelled from your home; when you live under an embargo, criminal society, corruption; when you see that even your premier's life is not safe; you then have a lot of reasons to be scared. And people, when they're scared, they need to be led by leaders and need a place to hide and the church is kind of made for that. In Serbia, right now, people have more trust in the church than in the politicians.
Biza: The church is now involved in politics; we didn't have that situation earlier on. Priests are appearing on TV saying things that should not concern the church. The church propagates anti-abortion and a conservative way of thinking. As lots of people are connected with the church it automatically affects their minds. These types of things are where nationalism and homophobia sow their seeds. Some people are involved with the church because they just feel it has something to do with their roots and culture, of which they are proud. They are not so concerned with the Christian way of thinking, I think.
Ljuba: It's not just that. The war in ex-Yugoslavia was led on a nationalistic basis, and it is significant that the Serbs are orthodox, and the Croatians are catholic. Because of that, religion was tightly coupled with the war, with nationalism. Plus, the church was reborn after years of false communism and is in expansion because of that.

MRR: As far as I know the Croatian, Serbian, and Macedonian hardcore punk scenes are pretty closely connected and lot of Serbian bands are going there to play and the other way around. So did you guys already play in Croatia or Macedonia?
Biza: No, we haven't played yet, because we are not able to organize ourselves because of some personal things. We have had a lot of calls to play in Croatia and Macedonia and I think we'll soon be going there. Croatia has good bands such as Senata Fox, Lasting Values, Panaceja, Razlog Za (RIP) etc., and Macedonia also, such as FxPxOx, Choice of My Own, and Speak our Minds. People are really attached to our music in those ex-Yugoslavian countries.
Ljuba: We'll go to Macedonia in late September/early October, right after the September examination term. We planned to go a long time ago, but something went wrong every time. I hope we'll soon go to Croatia too.

MRR: You have two 7"s out, one on 625 Records and the other on Know Records, both labels from the US. How did you get hooked up with those labels?
Biza: We've sent a lot of emails to various record labels saying we're a new band and that we need a release. Some of them never gave us any answer and some did. Max from 625 Records was the only person that was serious and excited about our type of music so he offered to do an EP for his label and we agreed. I think that 625 is a great label with a really good distribution and reputation in the US and Europe. Also, Albert from Know records was very kind to us and was also interested in doing our 2nd EP. He did it and it was great.
I think most of the labels are not interested in doing records for the bands from countries like Serbia. The bands can't get visas and leave the country so easily, so tours are just imaginary things. Touring is the way to sell your records and give your band a reputation and a known name. When you are in an isolated country, these things are pretty hard to do so the labels are not interested in investing their money. But I think some things have also changed in the way of thinking so now you can see a lot of international bands from Indonesia, Japan, Brazil, Macedonia, etc. on American labels which I think is really good.

MRR: Don't you think that being a European band and having releases only on US labels may limit your distribution a bit? For example your second 7" isn't that well distributed outside of the US, which is a pity, because I swear everybody who has gotten it has just loved it.
Dario: Yes, but if you ask me again, I would again choose a US label. Both times, we were sending recordings to both, US and European labels and the European labels were not interested. Besides, I have that feeling that everything that is from the States you can sell in Europe, but it's not the same case the other way around.

MRR: As far I know both records have been really well received by the international hardcore crowd, so what are the plans for the future?
Biza: We're currently working on our new release that will actually be our debut LP. I am very excited about that release and satisfied with our songs. You'll hear various influences on this album. I think the LP will happen next year and will be released again in the US.
Ljuba: Right now, that LP is the most important thing. As we have said, we're hoping to tour Europe once the LP is out. We have some ideas about what we will do after that, but everything in due time.

MRR: Do you already know what label is going to put out your LP?
Dario: No, but we have some that we are thinking about.
Biza: Yeah, we're thinking about Universal!

MRR: Biza, you've also started organizing shows for foreign and local bands in Belgrade, so tell us something about your organization Hardcore Massacre?
Biza: Hardcore Massacre is a booking organization for foreign HC bands. I was a bit disappointed with the bands coming to Serbia and I didn't want to wait for someone to bring bands that I liked so I just grabbed the necessary things and I am now doing it myself. I also wanna let people see good bands that have something to say and that represent hardcore music in a good way. For me that is positive thinking mixed with DIY ethics.

MRR: This question is for Ljuba. In my opinion the biggest part of the international hardcore scene is suffering from a lack of women, so I'm wondering how the situation is in Serbia and how do you feel about being the only female in the band?
Ljuba: Our scene is also suffering from a lack of women. Although there are girls at the shows, only a few of them are really into hardcore punk. I'm used to that. I'm totally reconciled with being the only female in the band, and it's completely normal for me to only play with boys. I guess now it would be weirder for me to play with another woman. I have a lot of male friends (more than female), and that's totally ok with me. If you ask me why there aren't more women that relate to hardcore punk, I wouldn't know how to answer that.
What bothers me is that the scene is filled with sexism as much as our society is. In theory, all the people in the scene are non-sexist and stuff like that, but those little things which have entwined into our society have done so in the scene as well. I don't like that I'm surrounded by it, wherever I go and whoever I am with. It doesn't matter if I'm with girls or with boys; it's reached into everyone's mind.

MRR: And what about Ha-ko?
Ljuba: Ha-Ko is a hardcore punk label that Mare (our bass player), Dule, and I have. It's similar to what Biza said about Hardcore Massacre. Our idea is to support the bands, give them an opportunity to put their demos out, and also to give people a chance to hear good bands. So far we have eight releases from some Serbian bands. We've also released the Let's Grow Neverending Story on CD. Our main cause is to help the scene around here and I hope that soon, we'll send some releases to Western Europe. If you're interested, check out our website (at least the download page, because the rest is in Serbian) www.hakobastards.com.

MRR: How old are you guys and what are you doing besides playing in the band?
Dario: 22. I am a student.
Biza: I am 23. I also play in two other bands beside Let's Grow. I am involved with 3D animation and visual effects and watching a lot of movies!
Ljuba: I'm 21. Beside Let's Grow I have Ha-Ko, and I am studying architecture.

MRR: Did you guys ever get involved in the Otpor! (Resistance) movement back in the late 90s and what actually happened with that organization?
Dario: I didn't. Maybe I was too young back in those days. I don't have any idea what's with them. I think that their main point was to overthrow Milosevic's regime. I know they were active after that for a while but no, I don't hear about them anymore. As I already said, people here are so disappointed with everything that has happened. They expected a lot from the revolution on 5th October 2000, but they received almost nothing, so they have become politically uninterested. I'm looking to my whole generation (including myself) and we are not voting for but against. A lot of young people don't even want to vote against, so because of that the 20-30% of the population who are voting for the nationalists can actually win, and that's sad.
Biza: I think that that organization is no longer active but some people from Otpor are still involved with politics and stuff.

MRR: Before we finish this interview, what are the ten best hardcore punk releases of all time?
Dario: I hate this kind of a question because it forces me to make a choice between most of my faves, and if I don't mention or forget to mention some record, I'll be pissed off so I will not answer you.
Biza: Minor Threat - Out of Step, Infest - Slave, Negative Approach - Tied Down, Agnostic Front - Victim in Pain, Jerry's Kids - Is This My World?, Youth of Today - We're Not In This Alone, Circle Jerks - Group Sex, Suicidal Tendencies - s/t LP, Black Flag - Damaged and last but not least Deep Wound 7".

MRR: Do you have any final comments?
Dario: Vitamin X's singer wears women's underwear with Negazione patches and dreams about original Koro and Vile.
Biza: Have fun and take care of your family and dear friends because they're sometimes the only world you have.

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FRUSTRATION

When pals start a band, one should always be nervous because if they suck, one's bound to lie to his friends or lose them. And if you decide to lie, you're going to have to go see their lame shows, at least some, you're going to say thank you with a big smile everytime they offer you their latest demo or record that you deserve to get 'cos you are such a good fan. I hate to lie and I hate losing friends. Frustration was put together by five of that kind so I was mighty glad to find out right away that they were not bad. And not only were they a good band, but a great one. I was even comfortable enough to tell them I wasn't too wild about their first recording, a cover of my band Anteenagers MC's "Teens" (three of them being also members of that unit by the way). It was an early rush affair, anyway, and it's not that bad, actually. After an awesome self-released 12" EP, which was just reissued on CD, they just recorded their next four-song project and are planning another session for a 7" on Sacramento's ace SS records. If Warsaw, Joy Division or Crisis are your cup of tea, you're bound to enjoy this electric quintet.

Frustration are: Fabrice Gilbert (vocals), Nicus Duteil (guitar), Junior Campo (keyboards), Marc Adolf (drums, backing vocals) and Manu Blervaque (bass, backing vocals).

MRR: What are your musical backgrounds?

Fabrice: I studied classical trumpet for ten years. In '82-'83, I was in a post-punk band, Ersatz, then another one, La Colère de l'Autruche (Ostrich Anger) in '84-'85. Then I had a cold wave band, Zurück Placenta, between '86 and '91. Then a noise/hardcore band called Flathead. That was from '93 til '97, when I formed les Teckels. And in '02, Frustration started.

Nicus: At the end of the 80s, in high school, I was in a couple of punk bands with my school pals, les Zouaves and La Bande à Vibro. I met Warum Joe in the early 90s. I was a fan. I soon started to do some drum machine programming for them, then some guitar and finally started to write songs. I also had a few bands here and there with people I met at my work, Ark Studios, a rehearsing and recording place. In the late 90s, I finally met the Happy Family via the No-Talents. And troubles started as I joined les Terribles, Anteenagers MC, Opération S and Frustration.

Junior: I've always been an artist. My music is just a way to express my art. My background is all about Art.

Marc: My first band was a psychobilly band, Ze Craignos Monsters. Then I played drums for the No-Talents and sax for the Loud Mufflers. Then came les Teckels. These days, I'm also playing with les Dragueurs and the Four Slicks, both bands with Jon Von that used to be in Mr. T Experience and the Rip Offs.

Manu: I tried a lot of different styles of rock 'n' roll, mostly with yourself so you should know. This includes a few recording bands, Steve & the Jerks with Junior, les Teckels and Anteenagers MC with Nicus and Junior.

MRR: Why did you chose that name?

Fabrice: I hate that feeling and I love the Crisis song.

Manu: I hate this name. Fabrice feels like that so he pushed it down our throat just to piss me off.

MRR: What are your influences?

Fabrice: Mostly the post-punk British Wave. Bands like Joy Division, the Fall, Malaria Crisis, Section 25, Wire. Or even the Screamers.

Nicus: I also influence the band. Even more than influence, I am an inspiration for these guys.

Junior: Hey, me too! They always look in my direction when we're creating new sounds.

MRR: Who's writing the songs?

Fabrice: I write all the lyrics and the music comes from everybody in the band. I'm sure we're bound to go to court in the future to figure out who wrote what [laughs].

Marc: I don't write anything!

Manu: Yeah, Marc ain't much involved in this band actually.

MRR: Since we're doing this for Maximumrocknroll, are

ART MUST HAVE THE LAST WORD!

you guys punk or rock 'n' roll?

Fabrice: Rock 'n' roll is punk and Punk must be rock 'n' roll!

Junior: We're artists!

MRR: Fabrice is the only one showing he's having fun on stage. Do you think most people take it seriously or do you think they see it as a joke, or some kind of self-parody?

Nicus: It's just an attitude. We're having fun inside, I'm sure they realize that.

Junior: We're creating art there; it's serious. It's like another dimension. Fabrice is our link to this one.

Manu: Nicus had fun at our first show and we made it clear that he was wrong. Not laughing on stage is a rule among us.

MRR: Lately you seem to have a bit of a "dance" thing going on. Is it an accident or did you choose that path?

Fabrice: We love dancing. It's a choice.

Nicus: Our music is kind of sad but we don't want it to be boring.

Junior: We are what we are, even if we don't want to be.

Marc: I don't agree. I find our music even less danceable than in the beginning. It's more tense, just more electro-punk.

Manu: Girls love to dance and we love girls. In fact, we just play whatever we want to play and that's all.

MRR: Fabrice, you studied classical trumpet for ten years which makes you the only real musician in this band. Now you're the only one not playing any instruments. You never wanted to?

Fabrice: No, I did want to. I played a little bass, pretty badly. Before les Teckels, I wanted to play drums in an oi band, just to play the very basic tchak-poum tchak-poum. But every time I wanted to play an instrument in a band, they put me in front of the mic. We did some songs with two bass guitars in Zurück Placenta, I was playing one of them. But every time it was, "No, no." "Did I do anything wrong?" "No, but you're going in the front." I really dreamt I could play an instrument.

Manu: But the voice is an instrument.

Fabrice: Yes. And even though I don't play, I write some songs.

Manu: He comes with ideas and tells us what to do. He's our Joe Meek.

MRR: Are the lyrics important?

Fabrice: The sound of the words is the most important. These guys don't care about what I'm singing about.

Manu: As long as the English is correct.

Fabrice: I sing about all my feelings, my fears, what I despise, my frustrations.

MRR: So far, all your songs are in English. You did songs in French with your other bands. Do you plan to do some with Frustration too in the future?

Fabrice: No and there are two reasons for that. First the other members don't want to—

Manu: Hey, that's preemptory! You're wrong.

Marc: Yes, you're wrong, but it's not to do like Zurück Placenta. [Laughs.]

Manu: To do better!

Fabrice: OK, I've still got two reasons. [Laughs.] There are things I feel comfortable at singing in French and others not. In this band, I make no compromises in what I'm saying so it's easier for me in English.

MRR: How do you feel about your records so far?

Fabrice: I sometimes wish we had a real big sound, but other times I wish it was more experimental, more DIY. I have mixed up feelings really.

Nicus: I think the 8-track was fine but we're now looking for a bigger sound in a studio with more options.

Marc: Our records are good but we can do better.

Manu: I'm a bit skeptical about trying to record with better equipment, I like the DIY deal.

MRR: The CD version of your EP has got two extra cuts (a live cover of Crisis' "Holocaust" and "Teens"), ain't that a bit of a rip-off for those who bought the vinyl?

Fabrice: CDs are ugly but they're convenient. Get the vinyl and ask us for an mp3 of the live one.

MRR: You're about to record with a real producer in a real studio. How do you feel about letting someone outside of the band be in charge?

Manu: I'm excited.

Fabrice: Me too.

MRR: Are you going to leave him alone or will you be on his back constantly?

Nicus: During the recording, he'll do whatever he wants. But when it comes to the mix…

Manu: We'll tell him what we think. He'll give us his ideas and we'll react. He was already involved in the choice of the songs actually.

MRR: How many songs are you going to do?

Manu: Four.

MRR: Nicus, you're playing in five bands. How the hell do you remember which song is which?

Nicus: It's not always a piece of cake. I sometimes need to hear the riff to figure out what's coming.

MRR: Marc, you're playing in les Dragueurs, a basic garage rock 'n' roll band, and the styles are totally different. Do you have to think about what you do with each group or does it just happen?

Marc: I never thought about it. It's just instinct.

Manu: I always say that Marc is the one who's the least involved with this band. [Laughs.]

MRR: How is it to play along with a drum machine on a couple of songs?

Marc: It's easier, I just follow what I hear and Nicus doesn't make a face. [Laughs.]

MRR: Manu, you're playing bass with this band while playing guitars in all your previous ones. Often bass is in the background while the guitar is the main instrument. Do you think it pushes you to play louder or fuller so you're more in the front?

Manu: It's just that I'm half deaf so I naturally play louder. [Laughs.] Like Iwan [of the No-Talents, Teckels, Terribles, Opération S fame] I want to be heard but I specially need to hear myself. [Laughs.]

Nicus: For Frustration's sound, the bass needs to be loud anyway.

Fabrice: The bass is at least as important as the guitar here.

Nicus: Even more.

MRR: What happened to les Teckels ?

Manu: I wanted it to stop.

Fabrice: Manu wanted to stop, we went on for a while. And the whole scene was going wrong again, like at the end of the 80s. I was fed up with some of the audiences' attitude also.

MRR: What's your opinion on today's music?

Nicus: I don't have any. I don't have the time, money, energy nor the willingness to follow what's going on.

Fabrice: Too much punk rock, skate punk, and emo-romantico-bullshit, especially in France.

Marc: Except for a few bands the media are talking about, like the Libertines or the White Stripes, the Underground has been the same for the past twenty years.

MRR: What bands do you feel close to these days?

Fabrice: I feel close to A Frames or the Intelligence, even though we don't exactly sound like that. But even though our music is a bit cold and sad, it's a music for rockers, not rock 'n' roll for goths.

MRR: Are you going to play outside of France?

Manu: We'd love to but it's a bit early.

MRR: You usually only play one cover song live. Is that a choice?

Fabrice: We'd love to do covers but we have a lot of songs of our own and I don't want to spend too much time working on cover versions.

MRR: "Holocaust" is quite political.

Fabrice: We do it because it's a fantastic song. It's also a way to make things clear. I may be intolerant in some ways, but I'm no Nazi.

Nicus: I love the songs and I stand for the anti-Nazi lyrics.

MRR: They used to ask bands "Beatles or Stones," "Clash or Pistols," with you should we say "Joy Division or New Order"?

Fabrice: I don't care about the Beatles, I hate the Clash because of Mick Jones, but I'll choose both Joy and New Order.

Nicus: Better ask us Warsaw or New Order. We want the tension of Warsaw and "Blue Monday's" beat.

Junior: And what about "Steve & The Jerks or Anteenagers"?

Marc: I prefer Joy Division.

Manu: That's the worst question you had today, and you already had pretty bad ones!

MRR: As you're all in at least one other band (Fabrice also sings in a Rose Tattoo influenced hard rock/oi group, the Old Cunts), what happens if someone wants to book one of those the same night as Frustration but in a different place?

Fabrice: I'll go for the better club, the one that sounds like the best show of the two.

Nicus: I'll probably go for the first offer, but as we're all friends, we can decide all together for the best thing to do.

Marc: I'll go with the band I get less shows with. We play a lot more with the Four Slicks than with the other two.

Manu: I'll try to see if both bands can get in one of the gigs.

MRR: Do you think about making an album? If yes, do you plan to do vinyl or CD?

Fabrice: I don't know. I think 12" EPs are better.

Nicus: I'd love to do one, vinyl, CD, I couldn't care less as long as we do it.

Junior: Let's not talk about it, it's bad luck.

MRR: When you don't agree, who gets the last word?

Nicus: It's never me.

Fabrice: Manu is the only one who always wants to have the last word.

Junior: Art must have the last word!

I'M A BIT SKEPTICAL ABOUT TRYING TO RECORD WITH BETTER EQUIPMENT, I LIKE THE DIY DEAL.

BASTARDÄSS

BRUTAL, RAW, AND FUCKED UP: BASTARDASS. THESE WEST COAST POWERVIOLENCE GIANTS TAKE CUES FROM CROSSED OUT, INFEST, AND DIRTY SOUNDING SOUTH EAST ASIAN GRIND–DELIVERING A WALL OF AUDIO TERRORISM SURE TO BLOW YOUR EAR DRUMS TO SMITHEREENS. CYNICAL AND HATE-FILLED ANGRY POWERVIOLENCE THAT IS DISGUSTED WITH THE WORLD. INTERVIEW BY SERGIO AMAFITANO.

MRR: Bastardass—why so much cynicism, so much hatred of life?

An: We're very bitter, I guess. We are definitely not a posi band. Although I do believe in trying to live a positive lifestyle, you can't be chipper about everything. A lot of my frustrations go into Bastardass. I think I speak for the rest of the band when I say we are all very frustrated young men. Aside from that, some of our songs deal with things in a positive light though.

MRR: Why exactly are you so illustrious?

An: I mean...look at us: we're brutal! Top hats and blast beats. We're just different. Better then average, I guess. I don't give a fuck what anyone says or thinks about what we sound or look like. We're the dapper dons of powerviolence .

MRR: What separates you from all those crusties you despise so much?

An: For one thing, we're not crusties. The crusties in the LA area are disgusting. They might as well be street punks. There is a lot of posing: no real action taking place. I especially hate those "scene crusties." Crusties, punks scenesters, it's the same shit. Now I'm not saying all "crusties" are like that, just like I'm not saying all punks are lazy, fashion-obsessed, trend-driven idiots. But most of the ones stinking up LA these days are. These trendy bastards will be on to the next thing once this is over for them. Fuck them. Don't even get me started on this whole new "HxC" trend.

MRR: What exactly is Bastardass all about?

An: Ourselves, life in general, overcoming obstacles, being the best at anything you do, playing really fast and violently, defying authority and limits, surviving avalanches, mud slides, car crashes, and near fatal injuries. We are about defiance of all things false in life.

MRR: What's the craziest show you've ever played?

An: It depends on whom you ask, actually. To me it comes down to the show in Fontana where we used Al from AxRxMx as our drummer and Alex got his nose busted, and the second Orphanage show where someone went through the window and kids were bleeding. David got a gash on his face and a chipped tooth, and I fucked up two guitars. The one in Fontana has to be the most violent shit I've ever seen though.

MRR: Tell me about the Orphanage and why you have so many issues with a lack of parents?

An: The Orphanage is a really small place where we've thrown shows. It's actually the house that our bassist lives in. Its really small and we cram thrash bands and 30-40 people in, and then madness ensues. All of us come from dysfunctional families, and most of us come from broken homes or no longer have fathers. We're here for the underdogs, the bastards like us.

MRR: You versus Henry Rollins, who would win?

An: We would. Fuck that guy. He's old and thinks he's a movie critic now. Does he still lift weights?

MRR: Yanni versus Satan, who would win?

An: Yanni is Satan. Yanni is God. Yanni is everything and nothing. To understand Yanni and his ways, his incredible music, you must open your heart and mind to him fully. Only then will you reach full enlightenment.

MRR: Tell me a little about Chuff Crew, its origins, its meaning, its intentions.

An: Whoa. It's going to be hard to speak for everyone, so I'm only speaking for myself, ok? Chuff Crew started in Wisconsin with some dudes and the band Copeater. I used to correspond with these guys online. Eventually, Chuff Crew's message spread worldwide, through the Internet and shit like that. I myself felt that Chuff Crew's lifestyle was right for me. I got together some friends around here, and to sort of have our own thing as well, started our own chapter of Chuff Crew: Chuff Crew Thrash Unit. Chuff Crew's message is simple: drink, skate, smoke, grind, chuff, and you're there. In everything we do, we do it to the fullest and rep chuff hard while we're at it. The thrash unit is a gathering of friends who love thrash and grind and love chuff. Mostly it consists of Bastardass, Gluttonous Sloth, MxTxUx, Field Trip, and a few of our friends. Our intentions are to live life to the fullest, skate, grind, thrash, and chuff until we get there.

MRR: What do you have to say about your scene and how do you think you fit into it?

An: Honestly, I don't think there is a scene. There is a lot of bands we play with and are friends with, but there's no real scene. If there is, then I don't think we fit too much in it. When we first started, we were playing really fast, thrashy type shit that not a lot of bands were playing in the area we came up in. We were sort of outside of everything because of that. Now there are tons of grind/thrash bands to play with. I think that's rad. Bands that we play or have played with that I think are rad as fuck: Life in Exile, GxSxUx, MxTxUx, AxRxMx, ACxDC (woah, look at all those x's!), Cream Soda, Cranial Constipation, She's Dead, the Zip Guns, Runamok, Terrorism, No Noise!, the Violent Threats, the Beatings. All these bands range from thrash, grind, powerviolence, etc. to just straight up hardcore.

MRR: What have you currently released

and what are your plans for the band in the immediate future?

An: We currently have two different demos out: a really shitty one entitled The Illustrious Demo which is five songs, and a new one we just finished up recording called Demo '05. The newer one has some of our more recent recordings and includes Jimmy, our recent drummer. It's very tight, raw, and clean all at the same time. We have an upcoming four-way split with Gluttonous Sloth, Mobile Terror Unit, and Field Trip entitled Chuff Crew Repping coming up as well as a 7" EP. All of these are through Militant-Records.

MRR: All your releases are going to be out on Militant-Records. Could you divulge the agenda of this record label?

An: Militant-Records (the dash is crucial) is a strictly DIY label that I run. It specializes in putting out grind, thrash, noisy shit that I like. The only agenda is to put out a lot of really great powerviolence/thrash/grindcore from the Southern California area and worldwide. I'm not restricting myself to only these genres. For now, I'm mostly just going to put out shit from friends' bands or SoCal bands. But if I find something I really like, I'll put it out.

MRR: You are all involved in some other projects as well, care to discuss?

An: Yes, we're all part of a crapload of different bands and things. David is a monk in his spare time. When not praying or subjecting himself to vows of silence, he sings in Mobile Terror Unit, and plays bass for Field Trip. Alex is a washed-up porn star in his spare time, but his full time job (aside from the illustrious Bastardass) is to play bass in MxTxUx. I myself, when not being broke and in need of food, I sometimes play in Gluttonous Sloth, and I make horrifying noise in XFMD. Our drummer Jimmy also plays in Max Ward and Temporary Use when he's not collecting super rare records and porn.

MRR: How did you get into this style of music?

An: When I was younger I was really into metal, especially death metal and epic black metal, but one day I discovered Napalm Death. I got really into that shit after my friend let me borrow some CDs one day. Through grind I got into powerviolence and thrash.

MRR: How did you all meet up and decide to make these killer tunes?

An: We all met up in high school, sophomore year. David, Alex, and I decided to start a band with our friend Rigo. It was gonna be a really fast punk band. We where called the Juice (named after OJ Simpson). Rigo quit and we picked up this guy Elias as our drummer. We ended up playing a mix of old crust and thrashy ass punk. We put out two demos and played a crapload of shows in the LA area, mostly in East LA. We ended up getting bored with the Juice and decided we wanted something more serious and much faster. In February of the following year, we changed our name to Bastardass and brought Moses into the fold on second guitar. We quickly dropped the thrash punk for blast beats and grinding fast hardcore. We sort of started drifting from grindy shit into more powerviolence stuff. That's kind of where were at now. This is just the stuff we feel. We truly love and live for powerviolence.

MRR: You got any dirty little secrets from the LA underbelly of thrash?

An: A crapload. Ask me in person and I'll tell you. It's a raw fucking life.

MRR: I've heard people say that you are the Unholy Grave of Los Angeles. What do you think about that?

An: Fuck yeah. We all love Unholy Grave. We live by this band. It's in reference to the fact that we grind fucking hard and raw. Aside from powerviolence we specialize in really raw grind, so fuck yeah. Ramiro the singer of the awesome band Life In Exile said that to me at a show.

MRR: You all talk a lot of shit; why is that?

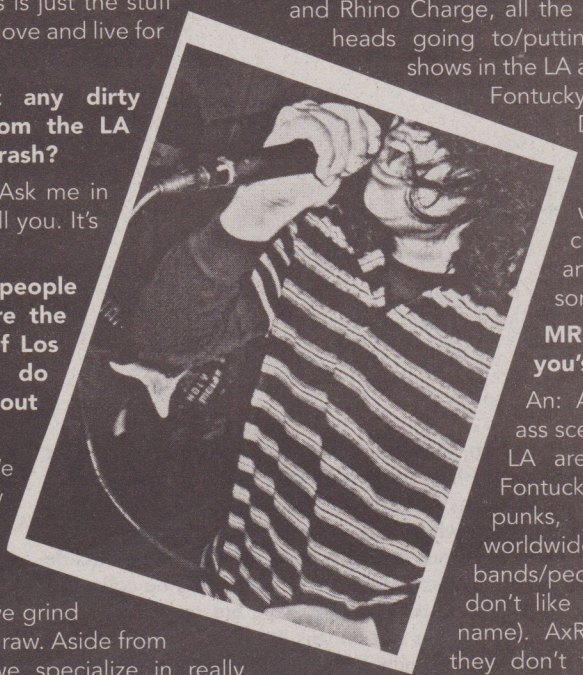
An: We hate everything. That, and it's funny.

MRR: Have you ever gotten handled on for talking shit?

An: Not exactly. Alex has been in a few fights over shit, but nothing at a show. When we were the Juice, we got into this huge brawl with a bunch of 30-year-olds in Pasadena. They were talking shit to Moses. Some guy tried slapping him, Moses spat in his face. Fists were flying after that. Last May, at a show in El Cereno, I got into it with four skinheads. They got mad because we were repping chuff real hard and talking shit in their direction. That and AxRxMx looked like "fags" so they started talking shit, calling us crusties (haha!). They started pushing me in the pit and some shit went down. Nothing too serious though. We're still a young band, we have many more fights to participate in. I'll keep you posted.

MRR: Last shout outs?

An: Big ups to Paul and Danny from Godstomper, crucial ass Max from Massachusetts, Copeater and the Wisco 606 Chuff crew, all the bands we kick it with and play with,especially: AcxDC, AxRxMx, Cream Soda!, No Noise!, Fro and Jake, Tony fucking Crust, Richard from NOYFB, Mike Thrashead for the history lessons at Headline,Tiger Uppercut!, Spring fucken Break!, Life In Exile, and GxSxUx! (Ramiro and Chris you crucial motherfuckers!), Magrudergrind, Brian skate Maryland!, N.B.C., Ryan "Ry Dog" and Rhino Charge, all the cool and true heads going to/putting on/playing shows in the LA area, SGV, and Fontucky. Billy fucking Delgado!!! Moses, Mike, Eddie, the whole East Los crew (MxTxUx and Field Trip, son!).



MRR: Last fuck you's?

An: All the poser-ass scenesters in the LA area, SGV, and Fontucky. skinheads, punks, and crusties worldwide. All the bands/people/places we don't like (too many to name). AxRxMx because they don't take showers. Sergio Amalfitano.

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Whatever Happened to the Punk Rock Revolution?

The Story of Icons of Filth

By Lance Hahn

"At 3:10 a.m., Saturday October 23rd the vocalist for Icons of Filth, Andrew Sewell, better known as 'Stig' died. Icons of Filth were playing a gig in a squat in Hackney when Stig complained of feeling unwell and we cut our set short so that he could go outside to get some fresh air. Shortly afterwards he collapsed and died, most likely from a brain hemorrhage but possibly a heart attack. He was an avid drinker but on this occasion had only drank four cans of lager. He didn't touch illegal drugs of any sort but within four hours of his death rumours surfaced about a possible heroin overdose. These rumours are of course ridiculous and insulting to a man whose body was not yet cold. What is the matter with some people? Anyway, when you're having a drink tonight, think of Stig and remember a man who lived life on his own terms but cared immensely about the world around him." This announcement came at the end of 2004 from the band that more so than any other represented the spirit and good intentions of hardcore anarcho bands.

Icons of Filth in just a few years produced several musical statements that had the same impact and influence as bands with twice the active career. While of the age of the earlier punk generation, what we know as being Icons of Filth came together at the start of the 80s.

Icons of Filth: "Icons of Filth formed out of the remnants of Mock Death in early 1980 which Daffy (guitar), Aitch (drums), Socket (bass) played in with Fran and Tina sharing vocal duties. Daffy, Aitch and Socket then formed Atomic Filth with Stig (vocals). The name was changed a year later to Icons of Filth and Ed replaced Socket on bass shortly after. The punk scene in Cardiff was pretty well close-knit so everybody knew everybody."

Though often misrepresented as being from Swansea (in Trouser Press for example), the group hailed from Cardiff.

Icons of Filth: "Icons of Filth would like to distance themselves from any rumors of ever having lived in Swansea! Cardiff was like any other working class community in the UK at that time, large-

scale unemployment. YTS schemes, plenty of fights—mainly with mods, who for some reason, had a problem with punks and would always start fights! And an overwhelming feeling that the USA and the USSR wanted to use Europe as the theatre for 'Limited Nuclear War,' and our leaders were only to willing to sign away our right to life by letting the US use Britain as a launching pad for cruise missiles and thereby making us a certain target if things did kick off."

From the start, the group was coming from a political angle informed by international issues and less subjective, personal music.

Icons of Filth: "Icons of Filth were influenced lyrically by what was going on, on a national scale rather than on a local scale, as was the music. The punk scene in Cardiff at that time was pretty big with many gigs by touring bands. Most punks used to hang out at a pub called the Lexington from 1978 to about 1980 and then at the Casa Gil from 1980 to 1982. After this period, punks would meet up/drink at various pubs around Cardiff until moved on, usually after a couple of months."

With such a thriving and varied punk scene, it was easier than other places to pick up on what was happening in London with Crass and the growing anarcho scene.

Icons of Filth: "Through bands such as Crass, it was the logical next step from '77 punk. Punk was a rejection of not only the previous generation of bands that had lost touch with its audience, but also the very establishment that these bands had become a part of. Anarchism gave meaning to what a lot of us in the punk scene felt about society."

As was dutifully represented on all of their releases, Icons of Filth were quintessentially a UK hardcore band with appropriate influences as well.

Icons of Filth: "Pretty much, IOF were heavily influenced by bands such as Crass, Discharge, Conflict, Anti-System, Subhumans, etc."

With a thriving local scene, but little in the way of record labels, the band had much time to gig around and work out their set. The result was several years conditioning the band to value live performances and develop their own chemistry beyond question.

Icons of Filth: "To start with, IOF played around the Cardiff area and most of the gigs were attended by friends and the gigs had more of a family atmosphere. Once IOF started playing more gigs in other areas, the crowds became much more enthusiastic!"

With the band members more and more fascinated by the anarcho scene happening in London, it was clear that the music wasn't going to be coming to them. To see the bands, you would have to make the trek to where they were playing, sometimes taking days to get there. But the result was more than just being spectators as they became familiar with the bands and crucial friendships and connections were made.

Icons of Filth: "Stig and Ed used to hitch up and down the country to go and see Crass and became good friends with them. This is how IOF became friends with Colin from Conflict too, as he used to do the same (as did Ian Astbury from The Cult!)."

It was Colin from Conflict, with whom they had the most in common musically, that first spoke to them about a recording project. By 1982, he had started Mortarhate Tapes and had released Conflict's *Crazy Governments* cassette LP. His second project would be the debut recording of Icons of Filth.

Not on Her Majesty's Service was a ten-song wall of sound. The stark cover sans graphics even looked like they meant business. From "One Second to Midnight" to "Cut the Crap," the group flew threw the material with a force that started where the early Discharge singles ended. While several of the songs were later rerecorded for their debut LP, "Politricks," "Your Military," "No Fucking Choice," and "Cut the Crap" were only ever made available through this tape.

A lot of the success had to have been the band's confidence. Despite it being their first foray into the studio (recorded at Xntrix Studios in London, no less), they never caught their own shadow.

Icons of Filth: "No, Atomic Filth recorded a demo that never saw the light of day. The process of recording was nothing special, we just wanted to get in and get it done, we enjoyed playing live more."

While never a band to tour to promote an item, the tape was if anything a means of keeping the group on the road.

Icons of Filth: "IOF did tour after the release of the cassette but the tour wasn't associated with the cassette, it was something that had been organized separately but coincided with the release. IOF were constantly touring!"

Through Stig and Ed's travels to see Crass gigs, they became friends with Steve Ignorant. Quick on the heels of the tape, this lead to their first vinyl release on the second Crass imprint, Corpus Christi. This found the group working with Penny on what would be the *Used, Abused, Unamused* 7" EP.

Icons of Filth: "Very friendly and approachable. Penny Rimbaud was the only one that IOF were in contact with when recording *Used, Abused, Unamused* and he was great. He put a lot of input into the production."

In this day and age there is an atmosphere of property between labels over the bands they work with, even in the DIY punk scene. Labels that put out one single for a band often assume the band is obliged to do more. The atmosphere was much more relaxed back then allowing for Icons of Filth to work with Mortarhate while doing a single with Corpus Christi.

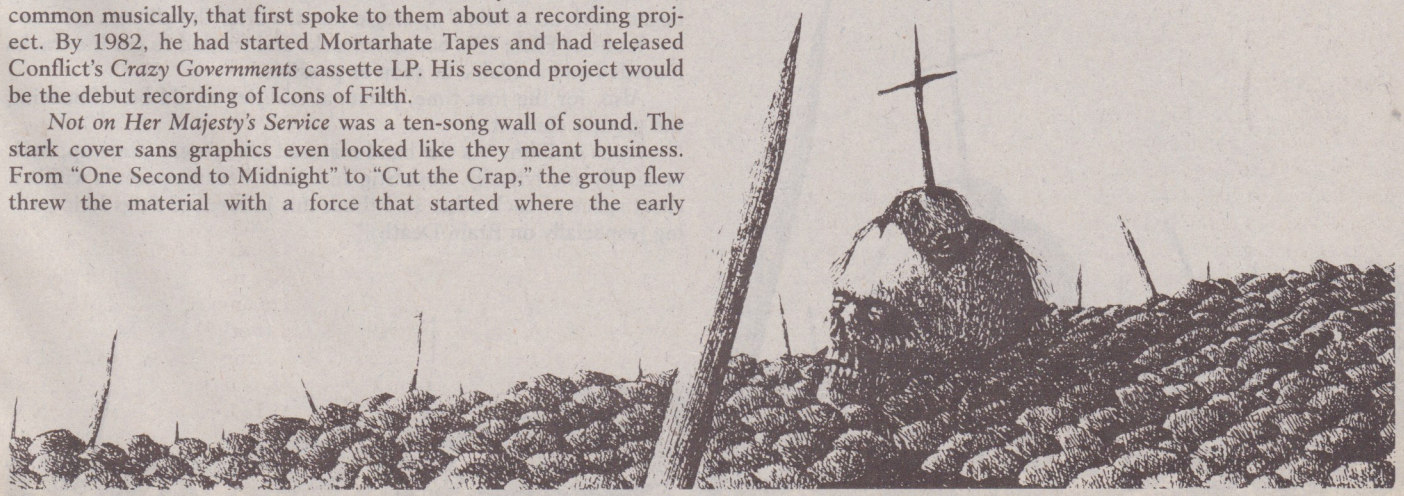
Icons of Filth: "Because of IOF's friendship with Colin Conflict it seemed like the logical thing to do. Corpus Christi was a one off, most anarcho and/or independent labels are pretty relaxed—a verbal agreement would be made to record a 7" or whatever and then it would be released. You wouldn't be obliged to stick with a label, just as they wouldn't be obliged to put out your next record."

Oddly enough, it's the three songs other than the title track that seem most cohesive, dealing with the alienation and fear that are cause and effect with religion and it's vicious circle.

God is a measure of our own insecurity
God is used as an incentive for us to kill
To protect governments own security
Security of their wealth and power and legalized crime
The myth of god keeps us all in line

The lyrics almost read like sermons and rants.

Icons of Filth: "It's the way that a lot of young people were feeling in the U.K. at that time. Crass and the bands associated with that scene were a major influence on Icons of Filth.



"...Stig was very much an atheist as was Ed, whereas Aitch and Daffy would have been more in the agnostic camp."

In an age where organized religion wasn't regularly attacked with such caustic venom, there was an ominous feel to the record. This was cemented by the highly detailed ink drawings that made up the band's first graphic images. They would serve Icons of Filth much in the same way that Rudimentary Peni was served by their art.

Icons of Filth: "Squeal did the artwork, he became a fifth member of the band."

Even the sound of the record is almost cavernous. With a decent budget to record four tracks, the group was able to capture its explosive attack without falling into any heavy metal or hardcore clichés.

Icons of Filth: "IOF never felt any scrutiny from Crass. Cave Studios was very laid back. Recording is very boring at the best of times, so between the serious bits (recording) we would just try and have a laugh amongst ourselves."

Powerful and without much to compare it to, the record was a big success for the group. With its release in August of 1983, the group was still gaining momentum.

Icons of Filth: "The response was pretty good, more people at gigs would sing along to the songs, so people must have been buying it! We felt connected in the sense that they were feeling the same way about society, war, etc. as we were."

At that point, the band was gearing up for their debut LP. But before they could do that, they needed to find a new bass player as Ed had decided to leave a few months after recording *Used, Abused, Unamused*. His replacement was a guy named Fish (credited sometimes as Sab Hunt). In the meantime, they like so many other bands of the genre were being asked to contribute to various compilations. Icons of Filth selected two to get involved with, recording a song called "Evilspeak" for Maximum Rocknroll's *Welcome to 1984* compilation and "Stupid" for Mortarhate's *Who, What, Why, Where, When?* LP.

With Conflict planning to do its second album on Mortarhate Records and starting to work with other bands like Hagar the Womb and Lost Cherrees, it seemed like a logical place for Icons of Filth to record their first full length.

Moving very quickly, the band had *Onward Christian Soldiers* out by March of 1984. This time recording at Heart and Soul with Pete Fender, the record still sounds like the group but with its own unique character. Fender's recording style tended to deaden some of the noise, bringing the songwriting to the surface. For Icons of Filth, it exchanged just a little of the blinding force for a bit more complexity. Possibly, the production simply made the existing complexity more visible.

Icons of Filth: "Again, a very relaxed atmosphere. It took two days to record; Conflict would pop in occasionally. Pete Fender knew his stuff big time."

The result was something of a more sophisticated approach to the current hardcore sound, still to some degree worn on sleeves.

Icons of Filth: "IOF were listening to Discharge, Rudimentary Peni, Flux of Pink Indians, Dead Kennedys, MDC, AYS, etc. IOF weren't trying to get at anything in particular. Someone would come up with a riff and if everyone liked it, it was used—there were no plans."

The grim lyrics took the gothic horror of death rock and aimed it at tangible realities.

Bodies clamped firmly in position
Ripped open
Animal fission
Taken beyond the pain barrier
And back again
Death is the only release
Liberation please

Icons of Filth: "IOF got into animal rights through Crass and the bands associated with that movement. The band were all vegetarian/vegan and ardent hunt saboteurs."

Life ain't no fun in this fucked up state
Where they teach you to love in a world of hate
This world they run and treat as their own
Using politics, religion, the Queen on her throne

Icons of Filth: "IOF were pissed off and angry but still felt that peace was a far better alternative to war. However, IOF were never pacifists."

But despite their vocalized concern over the cruise missile and the threat of nuclear war, the band was always wary of involving themselves in bigger political organizations.

Icons of Filth: "None, IOF were very wary of any big organizations. The threat of nuclear war, however, was very real at that time."

The record is topped off with cover art picturing a hooded, winged demon surveying a christened skull on a barren wasteland. There was no time for lost love on this record.

With *Onward Christian Soldiers* coming out just before Conflict's second LP *Increase the Pressure*, it made sense that the bands would do a lot of touring together. But Icons of Filth were by and large a road band and would pile in the van at every suitable opportunity.

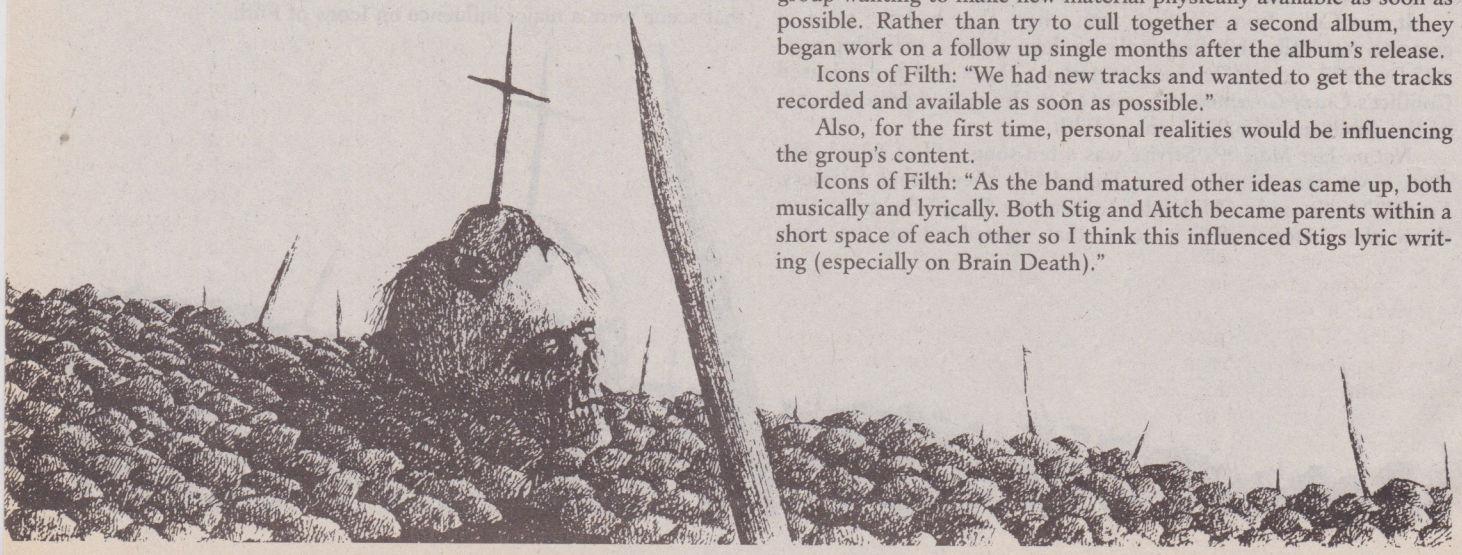
Icons of Filth: "IOF toured constantly at this time but not really to plug anything, all gigs were pretty mental. At this period IOF were still mainly touring as a support act to Conflict, whereas later on we would tour in our own right, with other bands such as Anti-System and Antisect."

The immediacy of club gigs helped propel the group forward. There was an urgency that directly resulted from the nightly responses they were getting on the road. This manifested itself in the group wanting to make new material physically available as soon as possible. Rather than try to cull together a second album, they began work on a follow up single months after the album's release.

Icons of Filth: "We had new tracks and wanted to get the tracks recorded and available as soon as possible."

Also, for the first time, personal realities would be influencing the group's content.

Icons of Filth: "As the band matured other ideas came up, both musically and lyrically. Both Stig and Aitch became parents within a short space of each other so I think this influenced Stigs lyric writing (especially on Brain Death)."

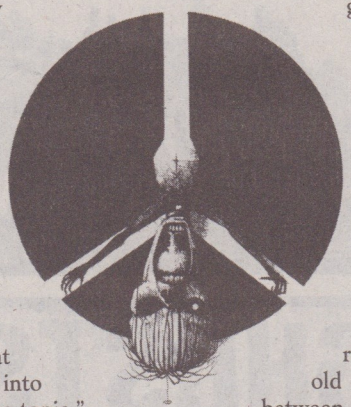


Just another birth
Another life
Another brain
To screw up and nullify
To help achieve your aim
Another minds growth stunted
And then filled up with shit
Never asked for life
But he'll have to learn to live

The three song *Brain Death* EP was recorded in Cave Studios in Bristol, a town somewhat known for its jolly, pissed-up crusties. That and its nearness to Cardiff would make it the only studio Icons of Filth would visit twice. Released at the end of 1984, the record is especially grim in the context of new family lives. The engrossing cover art further examines their disassociate fear for their children's future depicting a deformed embryo, like what you would find at the Mutter Museum. The music perfectly reflects the dread with almost baroque arrangements struggling against their amplified instruments. As much as Stig was trying to lyrically express his new feelings on family life, so was the band trying to evolve congruently.

Icons of Filth: "Both were as important as each other, as well as the artwork. Without the music we wouldn't have been able to get the lyrics across, and without the artwork, some people may not have picked up the records. Every member of the band had an equal part to play."

The result was a bounty of new material. Despite the busy road schedule, the band was ready with another volley of material for 1985. Unfortunately, the only evidence would be that summer's *The Filth and the Fury*" 7" EP.



For the first time, the group tries to put into words some of what they were trying to express in plain terms. In addition to the three songs that make up the record, there is an open letter to the listener about the meaning of the record.

Icons of Filth: "Just to give an explanation of what the lyrics were about, you can only fit so many words into a song and the liner notes were just expanding on the topic."

The three tracks, which include a much better sounding version of "Evilspeak," have a roaring, echoey feel that is almost frightening at times. Not that the horrifying content of songs like "Vivisector" aren't enough. But even the sound is almost otherworldly, with big guitars that once again avoid the heavy metal trappings that were happening a lot by the mid-80s.

I am the man in the white coat
Wherever there is pain you will find me
I record the data as cats choke
Then present the government my findings

While other groups who wrote songs criticizing what was happening in the punk scene often seemed like responding to very specific instances of violence or annoyance, Icons of Filth were all around flabbergasted on "Sunk Rock."

Icons of Filth: "The band were concerned that punk was becoming just another fashion trend, with the band itself just preaching to the converted. We were just trying to give people a kick up the arse! Nothing more, nothing less."

The group even went outside of their usual artist, who's idea it was to bring in additional graphics to heighten the impact of the presentation.

Icons of Filth: "Squeal was very good friends with Nick Blinko and Nick offered to do the artwork. IOF never played with Rudimentary Peni, unfortunately."

Unfortunately, by the time that record was in circulation, the band was coming to a grinding halt. The lifestyle the band was accustomed to was not jibing with the obligations Stig and Aitch were feeling. The band went out of commission with another dozen or so songs left never to be recorded.

Icons of Filth: "New material was written for another album after this but family commitments seemed to mean that losing money on gigs, tours, etc. was no longer an option and therefore became less and less frequent. The band never actually split up and that's why the band remained friends and found it so easy to pick up where we'd left off."

One last show was organized at the start of 1986 in Swansea. With the band inactive with no sign of getting active again in the near future, the other members began pursuing other musical projects.

Icons of Filth: "Ed played bass for an early incarnation of Demented Are Go as well as drums for the Cowboy Killers, Daffy and Fish played for a local rock band called Strange Days."

During the down time, interest in the group only grew. *The Mortarhate Projects* was released collecting the LP, the 7"s, and a few demo tracks. It came out in 1995. After that, bootlegs began popping up. BBP released a legit live 7" in '99 called *Show Us You Care* with Stig's help. It was from a 1984 recording.

A decade and a half later, still friends and of the same ideological mindset as before, the group came back together to pick up where they had left off.

Icons of Filth: "IOF had remained friends during the 15 year hiatus, and practicing again was suggested by Ed. Children were now growing up and other commitments didn't get in the way of the band so much. Everyone in the band enjoyed practicing again and decided to write new material. This was recorded and released as the *Nostradamnedus* LP. Between its recording and its release (a period of about a year or so), IOF began playing live again, recruiting Pete (ex-Spite/ In the Shit) as an additional guitarist."

For a moment it seemed like the band was back in full force with a bright future.

Icons of Filth: "We had to kind of find our feet as a band again; a bit of trial and error really. Working out what songs to play live, not really knowing if anybody would be interested in the old stuff (or the new!), and trying to walk a fine line between on one hand playing the old stuff because that's what people wanted to hear but us as a band feeling like we're doing a greatest hits routine, and on the other hand playing mostly new stuff because it's more relevant to today but the audience feeling like they haven't heard the IOF they know. It took us a while but we got there in the end and after finding the right balance the last year of gigs were definitely the best. All the gigs were spot on though, and we have some great memories. After Stig's death we decided to call it a day, as IOF without Stig isn't IOF."

The news of Stig's death was sad and not just a little eerie. Much of the anarcho scene has so often created lyrical imageries of death and destruction as both warning and information that the reality of death is almost divorced by the good-natured-ness of so many of the artists. A death in the scene can still be as painful as a death in the family.

Icons of Filth: "It was a challenge at that time, of course it was. Questions were being asked about Crass in parliament. Conflict were banned from playing in the UK. Squatting was at its most popular since the 60s. Anarchist punks organized and took over the financial district of the City of London, bringing it to a standstill as a protest against the arms trade. The animal rights movement and the peace movement were huge, much of this because of the interest generated within the anarcho-punk scene. Punks were arrested as well as getting their phones tapped, mail intercepted, homes raided; venues were being told to cancel gigs, undercover cops and agent provocateurs were sent to gigs/meetings/demonstrations—this doesn't sound like the actions of a government that didn't feel challenged. There are people in every strata of society today who's opinions and ideals were shaped by the anarcho-punk movement from that period, so therefore this has had a knock-on effect in the rest of society. How we interact with others on a daily basis has been shaped by anarcho-punk."

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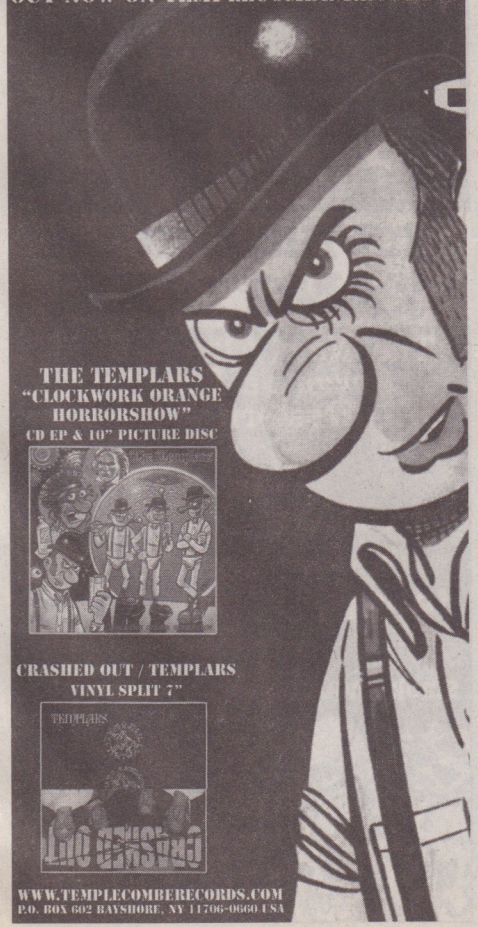

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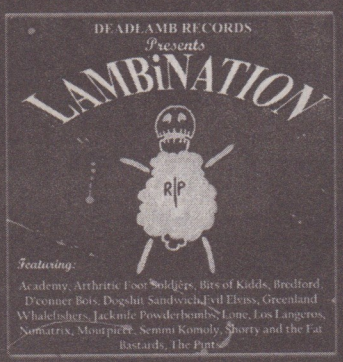

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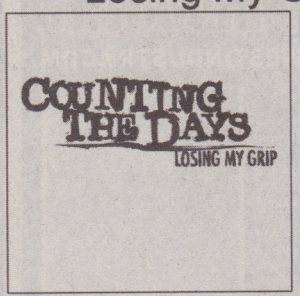

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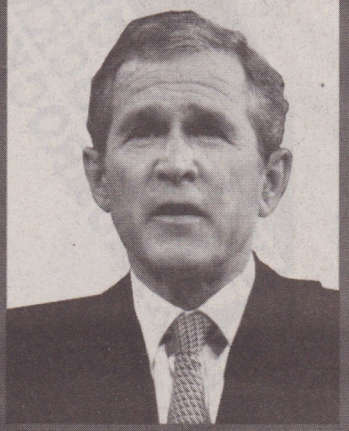

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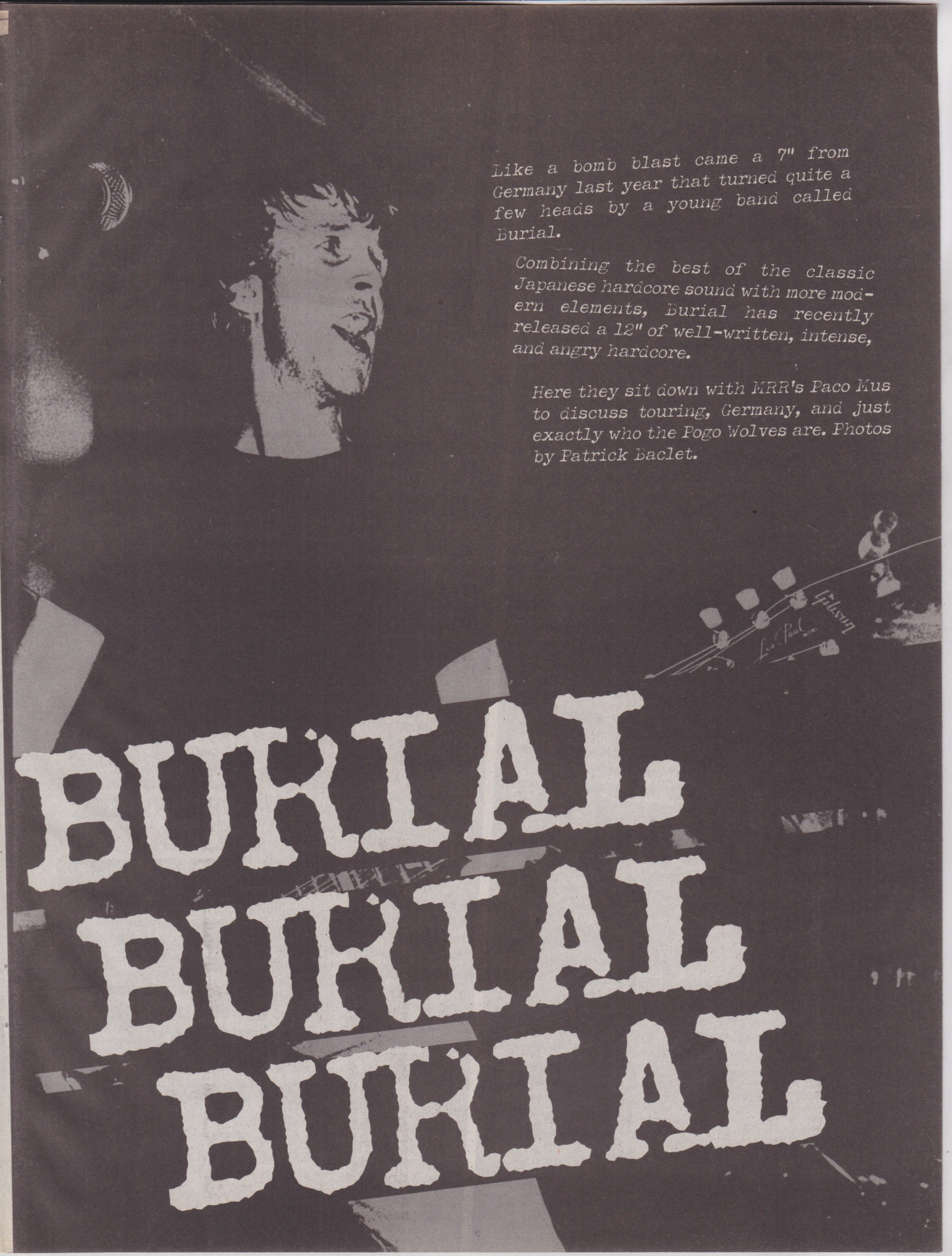

BURIAL BURIAL BURIAL

Like a bomb blast came a 7" from Germany last year that turned quite a few heads by a young band called Burial.

Combining the best of the classic Japanese hardcore sound with more modern elements, Burial has recently released a 12" of well-written, intense, and angry hardcore.

Here they sit down with MRR's Paco Mus to discuss touring, Germany, and just exactly who the Pogo Wolves are. Photos by Patrick Baclet.

MRR: Who is Burial? Where do you come from? How did Burial come together?
Wiho: Burial is destruction and insanity from Germany.
Lucien: Our names are Fabian, Wiho, Andre, and me, Lucien. I think it all started when I met Fabian in M lheim at this show. We talked together and noticed that we both wanted to start a band. Andre, who did a band with Fabian before, joined immediately and Wiho after a long search for a singer. I come from Bochum by the way.
Fabian: Yeah, that's it basically, but we all come from different cities.

MRR: Burial tours quite a lot for such a young band, right? I mean you were touring Europe having only one 7" out. How important is touring for you? What do you do outside the band that leaves you so much time for touring?
Lucien: That's right. We started touring pretty early. I think it is because we knew sort of the "right" people that supported us and helped us to get more possibilities to play shows (thanks to Stachel). I think playing live is one of the greatest things I can imagine. The others seem to be of the same opinion, so we try to play as often as we can. Most times I am unemployed or doing part-time jobs so it is no problem for me to be on tour.
Fabian: I also have a part-time job, which is rather cool. If I say I need some time off usually they give it to me. But we went touring that early because that's just what we wanted: to tour. Staying in the practice room is really stupid I guess. We have to get out there.
Wiho: I'm only living when I'm on stage.

MRR: You have a brand new full length out, so let's talk a bit about it. How do you feel about it? The LP is a co-release by three labels from different countries. Isn't it a pain in the arse to work with that many people?
Fabian: Usually it's a pain in the ass, that's true. It is often a hassle to work with more people, but this time it went really OK. I mean, all the guys involved are pretty cool dudes, so it wasn't that much a problem. And I am pretty satisfied with the end-result, from the artwork to the sound. I like it and I think it turned out good.
Wiho: I think the LP is better recorded than the 7" and it has some more "typical" Burial songs. If someone would be a pain in the ass we knew where to drop the bomb!
Lucien: I think it's really good we have the album out now. It took much time to get things organized after the recording so I'm feeling relieved now that it's out. The songs are not very homogenous in my eyes. We have recorded old stuff as well as new songs so I sometimes wonder if they really fit together, but all in all I'm pretty content with it. I think the biggest problem was the cover design. Concerning the different labels we had no big problems.

MRR: You use quite a lot of Japanese related imagery in your artwork, and your music itself is heavily influenced by modern Japanese hardcore. Why this fixation?
Lucien: For me it was not exactly on purpose that the band turned out this way. We started with a slightly different style, which was more hardcore influenced. "No One Who Leads No One Who Follows" was one of our first songs, to give an example. I didn't know anything about Japanese hardcore before I started the band, but I was pretty turned on when Fabian and Andre showed me some Japanese stuff. It is so fucking intense and powerful, and so after I started to listen to Japanese punk and liked it more and more. So the music got influenced as well.
Fabian: I don't think we concentrate too much on Japanese hardcore totally on purpose. I mean, it's just natural. We listen to this stuff all the time, not just only to this stuff but a lot, so it's just normal that we are influenced by it. If we listened to Mozart all the time, we would probably sound like that guy. Well...maybe not. But OK, we used the Japanese signs for Burial...you got us there.
Wiho: I wouldn't call it a fixation, but Japanese hardcore is the fuel that keeps me alive.

MRR: How important are the lyrics in Burial? It seems to me that they fit pretty well with the music but at times it seems they are a bit too forced. Do you think it would make more sense to sing in German since that's your mother tongue?
Fabian: Do you think they are too forced? Well, I'm not sure. What do you think, Wiho?
Wiho: Maybe my life is too forced, so the lyrics are as well.
Lucien: They reflect a common feeling inside the whole band. We are quite different people so it's hard to agree on political issues sometimes. I think that's why the lyrics are mostly about the feeling that you get of living in a fucked up society and not about certain current political issues. I think it is important to have a message that everyone can agree with totally. Everything else would be fake. The songs are in English so everyone can understand them. Who in the world speaks German? It would be excluding many people. The things we want to express as a band are not so complex that you can't say them in English so there's no need to use German.
Fabian: Personally, I really like when bands sing in their native tongue. Most of the great bands from the past...they sang in their mother tongue. Deutschpunk, Finland punk, Japanese stuff...almost everything. That's also what defined them. Not just from the music you could hear what country that band was from. I think it just fit with the music. But I don't think German would sound good with the Burial sound. We don't sound very German either.

MRR: Who are the Pogo Wolves? You used wolves in the cover of your first 7" and there are quite a few mentions of them in the new album artwork. Is that some sort of hidden messages or just pure imagery?
Wiho: The Pogo Wolves are the new dawn of pure hard-

core punks taking back the energy for whom it belongs.
Fabian: Oh, the Pogo Wolves. I think it's both. I pretty much love wolves. I read a lot of books about them and I'm pretty interested in them, and also what they stand for. I mean, it's a little cheesy, but anyway, they also have a sort of place in the punk history because a lot of bands used them in artwork.
Lucien: The idea of the Pogo Wolf gang evolved out of a group of the same people that formed many bands in a short time here like Bombenalarm, Doomtown, and Burial. It has no hidden meaning but the feeling that we feel related to each other in a way.
Fabian: I thought it had a hidden meaning like we're out for blood in the middle of the night all together. Or something.

MRR: How do you think living as a young punk in Germany effects what you do? For some foreign people it seems like a dream situation due to all the social services you have: youth centers in each town, tons of touring bands coming over etc., but still in your lyrics you reflect quite a lot of frustration and anger.
Lucien: Yes, I can imagine that it seems pretty cheap to complain about life since we live in one of the richest societies of the world, but things aren't as sweet as they used to be. The social welfare system is cut down constantly in Germany, and there's much repression here as well. It's not easy to make a squat or to do direct action and the police get more and more rights for repressive actions. You get pissed at all the fascism and hypocrisy that surrounds you. We have every reason to be angry about our environment.
Fabian: Yeah, but although things are getting worse—even here—it's true that we still have it better here than in other countries like let's say, Brazil or something. Sometimes I think so too; that we have it good here and that it seems weird to say, I'm against this or that, but on the other hand we don't feel oppressed or threatened like somewhere else. I don't know, man.
Who: Living in Germany is a nightmare but all in all, it is as bad as living in any other western capitalist society.

MRR: I know that some of you play in other bands such as Bombenlarm and Doomtown. Is there a new wave of German bands that we should know about? Any recommendations? Also, do you think that Europe is living a healthy time for punk bands?
Fabian: Man, I don't know if this is a new wave. It definitely isn't something special. It's just some dudes playing music. There are tons of bands here, and to be honest most of them I don't really like musically, but a new wave? Man, I don't know. As far as Europe is concerned, I think it is a fertile ground. There are definitely some good bands popping up.
Who: Doomtown is the worst band ever!

MRR: What were those fake tattoos about at K-Town fest this year? You guys like to party, am I wrong? It seems like you have so much fun while playing and then offstage is just more of the same. Is this important in keeping a band alive?
Who: Yes!!!
Fabian: Fake tattoos at K-Town? Can't remember, but yeah, I guess we just love to play music. Playing for sure is fun. I don't like bands that don't have fun. We just played with this one band the last time, they looked so bored while playing their own music...I mean, I don't really get it. If I play I play and I have fun doing it. K-Town is always a nice meeting with friends so of course some strange and funny shit is going to happen. That's all I want to say.

MRR: What are your plans for the future?
Who: Keep on keeping on!
Lucien: Taking over Japan!
Fabian: What do you mean? With this band?

MRR: Last words?
Who: Hunger never ends!

HRYÐJUVERK!

Maximumrocknroll is proud to bring you another fine contribution from our friend Filip of Hluboka Orba zine (reviewed in our Zines section this month) from the Czech Republic. Here Filip interviews Villi of the awesome, brutal Icelandic hardcore band Hrydjuverk. Read, learn, and enjoy! (Note: Icelandic letters in the band names are replaced with their nearest roman equivanlent, such as "d" for eth and "P" for thorn.)

MRR: Hrydjuverk—fuck, what a great name for a crust band—it sounds pretty raw! What does it mean? Is there any deeper meaning behind your name?

Villi: Yes, there is a deeper meaning behind it. Hrydjuverk means "act of terrorism" in Icelandic. What we wanted was a name that would both shock people and force them to think about why they find it shocking and what deeper meanings lie beneath that initial shock. We also wanted to use this name as a way of criticizing the "war on terrorism" because we feel that it is a very Orwellian thing to be fighting a war against a word, an enemy that can be redefined whenever the powers that be see fit. We also fear that this so-called war will reach into different spheres very soon: for example, against the anti-capitalist movement and the radical aspects of the animal and earth liberation movements. This would mean that activists doing nothing more than smashing a few windows or, at the worst, throwing rocks at cops, would be charged as terrorists and therefore would get no public support (who wants to support a terrorist in this day and age?) and long sentences in jail. The scariest aspect of all of this is that the general public supports this "war" almost unconditionally because they have fallen for the "either you are with us or against us" rhetoric, and while everybody agrees that terrorism is indeed a nasty thing that the world would be better without, what we really need to ask is what liberties are we willing to give up for a very shaky sense of security?

MRR: You sing in your native language. Why did you decided to sing in Icelandic and not in English—especially when your other band, I Adapt, sings in English? What are some of the advantages/disadvantages of using your native language? Are there more Icelandic bands singing in Icelandic?

Villi: From the day the band formed, it was clear that we would be a very political band, so I thought that singing in Icelandic would be better to get our point across to the people at shows and to those who buy records. Plus, I had some lyrics in Icelandic that I really wanted to use. We also wanted to try and express our view upon Icelandic political life, so it made sense to sing about it in our own language. I consider myself a poet, so I thought writing and singing in Icelandic would advance my skills as one. Another thing is that I think that Icelandic suits harsh music like ours really well, because the language has very harsh sounds, unlike English which is a rather soft language. Finally, I wanted to sing in Icelandic because I think that our language is a beautiful one and should be upheld in all aspects of culture, punk included. It scares me very much how "Americanized" Iceland is becoming, and I think singing in Icelandic is defiant of that trend. It is a reminder to people that we have our own language and our own culture, and it shouldn't be lost in all this current Americanization (and by the way, I have nothing against America, I just want cultural diversity in the world and not a homogenous world where everywhere things are the same). There are some more bands who sing in Icelandic like DYS and Tony Blair, and I must say that they really benefit from that. I can't really think of any disadvantages of singing in Icelandic. In fact, it is simply for the benefit of the music we play, and

makes it better.

MRR: What's the relationship between Hrydjuverk and I Adapt? With I Adapt you toured Europe and played in the Czech Republic as well—how do you remember the Vrah/ Roznov gig? Do you know anything about Czech HC/punk scene?

Villi: Two members in Hrydjuverk (myself and Birkir, the drummer) play in I Adapt. I Adapt has toured Europe two times already and the first time we played in the Czech Republic was at the Fluff fest, which was amazing! It's the coolest festival I have been to and one of the best shows I've played my entire life. The second time we played at Vrah in Roznov and that was also crazy, definitely one of the best shows we've ever played. I remember it being really fucking hot in there, I was soaking with sweat and I almost passed out from exhaustion. It was also great to see such diverse people there, and no one giving a fuck about scene fashion and shit like that, just dancing and having fun– not caring about if they looked stupid or not, just the way punk should be! I know a bit about the Czech scene, but not enough. I know labels like Day After, Insane Society and Malarie (who released the new I Adapt record on vinyl) and bands like Innoxia Corpora, Dread 101, See You In Hell, and some more, but I am always interested in finding out more about scenes like yours.

MRR: Speaking about tours, both bands toured the UK as well just recently, how did it go? I am curious to hear about your experiences since my band was in the UK recently as well, so tell us more about it.

Villi: We toured the UK together in December 2003, and then I Adapt toured the UK again in December 2004. All in all it was a great experience. I love touring and the UK is no different in that respect. What I like best is places like Boston, Harrogate or Newtown in Wales where people come out to have fun and fool around, and aren't too concerned with how they look or whatever. There are some downsides though, such as people who don't seem to be concerned with the social/political aspect of punk, and when you try to talk about the lyrics and what they mean people often shout stupid shit like "shut up and play" and stuff like that. To me, hardcore punk should be about getting a place to raise your voice about issues that concern you, so it is important to be able to talk about the lyrics, especially since it's not easy to hear them through the musical chaos, and since they are in Icelandic. Another thing that I like about the UK is the amount of small zines they have, something that I think is lacking in mainland Europe. Also, I quite dislike how much everything seems to revolve around drinking in the UK. I mean, I like to drink as much as the next guy, but a punk show should be more than just another reason to get drunk and fucked up. But in general I quite like the UK scene.

MRR: Since Hrydjuverk is a pretty unknown band, can you tell us more about your history, band-members, discography, etc.?

Villi: What is there to say, really? Like most punk bands, we formed (a year and a half ago) to vent our anger at an unjust world. Also, we thought there was a lack of punk bands in Iceland—too many metal bands and not enough Dis-worship (ha). The band consists of myself on bass and vocals, Birkir on drums, and Thorir on guitar and vocals. We are all really busy people running distros, playing in other bands (I think Thorir has, like, three or four other bands), etc., so sometimes Hrydjuverk suffers because of that, but somehow we have managed to release a six-song CD on our own label, Hrydjuverk Records, and a split 7" with Patient Zero from the UK on Holy Shit Records. We have recorded two more songs that appeared on a small compilation in the UK. We have a discography tape upcoming on a tiny UK label called Crack Fix Propaganda, but I think that will be limited to, like, 100 copies. We also hope to record a few new songs before Birkir takes off to Costa Rica in the end of January.

MRR: What kind of places do you usually play in Iceland? Are there any youth centers, squats, DIY clubs? Are there foreign hardcore/punk bands touring Iceland at all? How many people usually come to gigs?

Villi: Iceland is a bit strange in this respect. The population is only about 300,000 people, so there aren't that many punks. For a long time, there was absolutely nothing going on here punk-wise, but a few years ago the current scene took off and has been steadily growing ever since. It varies widely how many people come to shows but sometimes it's as many as 150 people. We don't have any squats, and no DIY clubs, so most shows are at youth centers or bars (with age restrictions, unfortunately), but recently an older fellow who was in one of the first punk bands in Iceland bought an abandoned fish factory and turned it into a massive centre for musical activities, with rehearsal rooms for about 30-40 bands and a hall for putting on shows. There is a PA and everything, so we are trying to have as many shows there as possible in order to keep it punk-friendly and active. Hopefully, we'll be better equipped in the future to have a steady scene. There are some foreign bands that come here. Both Birkir and I have been active in getting bands over and we've had some really good shows here with bands like Tragedy, Harum Scarum, Converge, Total Fucking Destruction, Out Cold, Let It Burn, Artimus Pyle, Give Up The Ghost, and lots more. Next up is Vitamin X coming over to play at I Adapt's last show before Birkir goes away, and then I have Rambo coming over in May, as well.

MRR: Can you make some local scene report from Reykjavik? Interesting bands, zines, labels, places, etc., which would you recommend?

Villi: Well, again, this scene is a bit different than most because of it being so young and the population of the country so small, but there are bands like Fighting Shit (thrashcore), Hryggjandi Sannleikur (thrashing punk), Tony Blair (old school punk),

Sólstafir (atmospheric metal, similar to Neurosis but a bit more rock and roll), DYS (anarcho punk), Hrafnading (metallic crust with a Motörhead twist), and Kimono (indie rock) that are really fucking good. Zines used to be something unheard of here in Iceland but recently we've had some popping up. I do one called Kröst (two issues out) that is a mixture of personal shit, fiction and music; Birkir does one called Gagnaugad (three issues so far) with interviews, columns and reviews; Thorir does one called Gubb, which is also personal and also has stuff about indie rock, and I've heard that there are a few more on the way as well. Birkir also has a distro that has the same name as his zine, and I took over a zine distro that has stuff like MRR, HeartattaCk and some political stuff from a friend who moved to Holland recently. He also wrote pamphlets about anarchism that we give away at shows. The glue of the scene has to be dordingull.com though. It is a webzine with a lively message board and it also hosts the websites for most of the local bands, and the guy used to release demos by local bands but he has given up on that. There are no labels except for Hrydjuverk Records, which I am trying to turn into a "proper" DIY label. I will have the first vinyl release out in a few months by a band called DYS who are really good. There are no punk record stores but there are two punk-friendly independent stores that sometimes get the occasional punk record onto their shelves, but mostly stock indie rock and electronic music.

MRR: What about the history of hardcore/punk in Iceland? Were there any interesting bands in the 80s or early 90s? Which were the first punk bands in your country? Do you know that one of the few Icelandic hardcore records on vinyl (I say "few" because I expect that most of releases of bands from your country are on tapes or CDs) was released in the Czech Republic: the split 7" of Forgardur Helvítis with a band from South Africa called Deviate on View Beyond Records in early 90s.

Villi: Punk came to Iceland in the late 70s and the first punk band was one called Fræbbblarnir. They sounded like a poor man's Ramones but had a few good songs in between. Then came Utangardsmenn (The Outsiders) who were a bit like The Clash and then punk became huge here with tons of bands popping up. A record label called Gramm, which was also a record store, was formed and released all of the old bands on vinyl. Most of it was very artsy, new wave stuff but there are some really good ones in between like Peyr, Purrkur Pilnikk, and Vonbrigdi. The Clash played here in 1980 and then Crass in 1984 and Crucifix played here in 1983 to 40 or 50 people in some basement. One friend of mine was there and said it was fucking awesome. But then after a few years everything just seemed to die down and all the punks became "normal" people, got jobs and had kids and just "grew up" I guess. In fact I think there's only two out of all the old punks that actually stayed punk throughout the years and are still punks today. Then in the early 90s death metal became the new trend and some punk bands popped up around the same time like Örkuml and Saktmódigur and they released a few records. That was also the time that Forgardur Helvítis was formed. One of the older punks I mentioned was the singer in that band (and the only punk in the band haha), and they have kept on going through the years, although he has now moved to Holland. Yes, I knew about the record they released in the Czech Republic and I have even met Pavel from View Beyond once when he was visiting Iceland. Most of the old punk stuff has now been re-issued on CD, but the vinyl is pretty hard to get.

MRR: Iceland, along with Norway and Japan, is part of the group of a few countries in the world which push for much softer regulations of whale hunting. I can imagine that it is probably a big issue in your country. Can you tell us more about it? Is there any opposition against whale hunting in your country?

Villi: Animal rights is something practically unheard of in this redneck country, so anti-whaling voices are very few and far between. The most vocal anti-whaling people are the people who own whale-watching companies, and that's only because they think whaling will hurt their business. There are a few of us opposed to whaling, though, but I myself try not to voice that opinion too loudly because I can't be bothered getting beaten up by redneck assholes. This whaling issue is so weird because it's not like whaling is a profitable business anyway. I guess it comes down to national pride to these fuckwits, who think it's our heritage, and therefore our national right, to hunt whales: a stupid argument if I ever heard one! These idiots wouldn't even eat the damn things anyway. I used to eat whale meat quite a lot when I was a child and I remember it tasting like shit. The fucking idiots even threw a whale barbeque at the dock in Reykjavik when the Greenpeace ship was there just to annoy them. That's the typical Icelandic mentality: any compassionate, ethical gesture towards animals, nature and even other human beings is laughed at and ridiculed by the masses who think it's a sign of weakness and it's considered "sissiness."

MRR: "Hrydjuverk supports the vegetarian/vegan lifestyle as well as any and all anti-authoritarian, nonviolent campaigns against capitalism, racism, sexism and all other forms of oppression": this is written in your split 7" with Patient Zero. Some people may say that "nonviolence" is already a pretty outdated and inefficient concept, and that violence is OK when used to achieve a good goal. What's your opinion about it?

Villi: We put that statement there as a sort of safeguard because of our name. We didn't want to be associated with something we disagree with, just because our name is very confrontational. The word "violence" can have many different meanings, depending on the outlook of each individual. I have no problem with riots, window smashing, vandalism, destruction of property (corporate-owned, not the property of individuals), and so on, but premeditated violence against people is something that I don't want to condone, although I can imagine situations where violence would be necessary. I'm not a strict pacifist because I would defend myself if I had to, and I don't have any qualms about beating up Nazis or such things. But there are some things, like the methods suggested by UK-based animal rights group Animal Jihad (abduction and torture of vivisectors, etc.) that I cannot support for purely ethical reasons. I think that if the much-glorified anarchist revolution will ever happen, then it will be violent; there is no escaping that. I guess it is a necessary evil, and I wholeheartedly support movements like the Zapatistas in Mexico, but I don't agree with random acts of violence with no larger purpose or meaning, that makes us as bad as the right-wing imperialist neo-liberal war mongers, and I don't want to stoop down to their level. I have sometimes voiced violent opinions at shows between songs to try and stimulate a reaction from the crowd, and it would not bother me one bit if someone would go out and kill the prime minister or something like that because the fucker deserves it after having given his, and the whole nation's, blessing for bombing the shit out of Iraq without the consent of the Icelandic population and even without the consent of our congress. Then again, I don't think killing him would change anything for the better, and in fact things would probably get worse because of all the sympathy he would get and the restrictive laws that would surely be passed if that would happen. I guess what it comes down to is that I wouldn't oppose violent actions taken against fascist politicians and such, but I simply don't think it would have the desired effect. Another thing is that if you justify violence towards certain groups then how can you justify not being violent towards others? Where should the line be drawn? When do you go from being a peace-and-freedom-loving activist who sometimes uses violence for a just cause, to being an authoritarian terrorist laying havoc upon everyone who disagrees with you? Where is the line between the two? That's why I'm always very hesitant with justifying violence but like I said, sometimes I don't have any problems with violent methods being used. Oh fuck, this answer is so rambling. Sorry about that.

MRR: Are you active in some local or international protests? Are there any issues you feel are most important to fight for (or against)? How do you try to transform your ideas in everyday life? Are there any political activities/groups in Iceland which you feel sympathies for?

Villi: I'm not as involved as I'd like to be, simply because of time restrictions and the fact that there is not much going on in Iceland. I was active in the protests against the war in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the protests against the massive dam that the government is building in the Icelandic highlands (which used to be Europe's largest untouched-by-man area) to create power for a huge, multinationally-owned aluminum factory, and some members of this band have been active in some animal rights actions here. I can't really pinpoint any one issue that I think is more important than others, because it's all inter-linked. It's impossible to fight for animal rights or against war if you're not fighting against the economic system which creates those problems, so I guess the most important fight is the fight against capitalism. That being said, I also think it's very important to fight for personal liberty, and at the moment that seems to be the most pressing issue because, after the attacks on the World Trade Center, civil and personal liberties have been very much under attack and CCTV surveillance is getting worse and worse, just to name an example. How do I transfrom my ideas into everyday life? Well, just by trying to live in a way that I feel is just. I don't eat meat and avoid dairy and eggs, I recycle and try to walk or ride a bike instead of using a car—although that can be hard in the winter. I try to treat other people in the way that I would like to be treated by them. I question everything. I think that's probably the most important thing: question everything! Not only what the mainstream media tries to impose on you, but also what political puritans try to enforce on you. Just because someone is an anarchist, that doesn't mean everything he/she says is the truth. It's important to make up your own mind about things and not get sucked into some sort of political platform where you have to agree with everything and everyone around you. And as for local political groups/activities that I support—well, there are plenty of them. I support the group that is fighting against the American army base that is situated here (the same group is also the biggest peace activist group in the country), and I support the Nature Watch group that is fighting against the dam building that I mentioned earlier. There's plenty of groups fighting for worthy causes here, but I'm afraid they are all too stuck in the mindset of electoral politics for me to fully immerse myself in their activities. For example, a group that I formed some years back together with some others that was to combat racism. It started out really well with lots of pamphlets being distributed and a good presense in the media and stuff. However, it very soon started to deteriorate into a political platform for some individuals in the group who used the organization we had formed as a tool to get themselves established within some

political parties of which some of us who had founded the organization wanted no part. I finally left the group when they issued a press release celebrating the fact that a local Nazi was sentenced in court for racism. I thought that decision was a limit on the freedom of speech, and as much as I hate Nazis I have to admit that they have the right to express their views, no matter how fucked up they may be.

MRR: I just did an interview for a new issue of my zine with a band from Brazil and when I asked them a similar question, to which I got this answer: "I was involved in protests many years ago, but today I don't have patience for it! People are stupid and like it! They're aren't interested—if they are fucked, if they have rights, they like of be exploited!" Since you seem to be pretty politically active, how would you react to opinions like this one?

Villi: I'm afraid that at the moment I agree with this more than I'd like to admit. I have been growing more and more disillusioned with all these "causes" in the last few months, and right now my outlook on life is pretty bleak and nihilistic. Then again, that is probably because I am battling with a really bad case of depression and finding hope is quite hard when you are as far down as I have been recently. I do think it is important to stand your ground and fight though. In the immortal words of the Subhumans: "Who's gonna fight their system? You! Me! Or fucking no one?!" So yes, even though I don't have much hope in the future or that things will get better, I do think that it's important to not be silent and not to give up, because if you do, then they have won. I'd rather die than let the fuckers get away with their evil ways without some resistance.

MRR: Since you play a Discharge cover, "Possibility of Life's Destruction", then I guess I dont have to ask you about your favorite Discharge song... Are there any other cover songs you play with Hrydjuverk, and what are some of the bands which have influenced your music in general?

Villi: Actually that isn't my favorite Discharge song, it was just easy to cover and we did it for fun when we were starting out. We thought that it came out rather well, so we decided to record it. I don't even know what my favorite Discharge song is… probably "Protest and Survive," or anything off the Why? album. Other songs that we have covered are "Exploitation" by Doom and "Like Weeds" by His Hero Is Gone. We are all musical perverts in the sense that we like a lot of different music ranging from 80s pop music (our drummer loves Big Country and stuff like that) to grindcore and death metal. For this band the biggest influences are probably Tragedy, Totalitär, Discharge, Artimus Pyle, His Hero Is Gone, stuff like that—but we are all such music nerds that we buy way too many records and our influences come from all over.

MRR: You mentioned in your previous mail to me that one of you is going to Costa Rica as a volunteer, can you tell us more about it? What are some future plans of the band?

Villi: Yes, Birkir is going to Costa Rica in the end of January to work as a volunteer somewhere inside the rainforest at a community centre and stuff like that. He will be there for six months and I'm so fucking jealous. I wish I could go as well, but I don't have any money and have to finish school. I did work as a volunteer at a vocational school in Guinea Bissau in West Africa a few years ago, and that was an amazing experience and a real eye-opener. As for the band, I have no idea. We're gonna try to record our new songs before Birkir goes and then see what happens when he gets back. We really want to do some touring at some point but that is something that will have to wait.

MRR: OK, that's all from me, if you want to add anything, feel free to do it. Thanks a lot for this interview, take care!

Villi: Thank you so much for this interview. It's great to know that our music is reaching out to different countries, and even better that you have given us this opportunity to express our views and beliefs. If anybody reading this wants to ask any questions or discuss these things further, then feel free to get in touch with me. I am always happy to get letters from fellow punk rockers the world over, and communication is what it's all about. Stay punk! Hrydjuverk, PO Box 18, 121 Reykjavik, Iceland. hrydjuverk@yahoo.com

HRYÐJUVERK!

CRANKED UP!

In the fall of 2000, several legendary Philadelphia area street punk bands converged to form Cranked Up!, an energetic and politically charged punk rock riot full of stance and stamina. Pat and Jason (Violent Society), Andy (Dead Empty, Bomb Squadron) and Sid (Super Hi-5), and newest member John (Party Wreckers) have been staining the local scene with blood-soaked battle cries since before their first EP "A Call For Solidarity" was released through Creep Records in 2002. Now, with the release of their sophomore effort "This is A Weapon" on Blackout Records, Cranked Up! are taking their proactive messages everywhere.
Interview by Jaqueline Sharayko

MRR: Cranked Up! appears to be a band with a message. So we don't get it wrong, what is that message?

Pat: The message is to be aware of what's going on around you and do what you can to change it. Punk has always been about rebellion, but for a time I felt punk was just about fashion. When we started Cranked Up! we felt the streetpunk scene on the East coast was lacking the social/political side of punk. There have always been really great streetpunk bands but most had nothing to say; maybe that's why some of them became so popular. It's easy to gain acceptance when you say only what people want to hear.

Andy: We call it as we see it. We say what we want, no holds barred. You can call it left wing, radical socialist, or whatever label you think fits best. Inevitably, not everyone agrees with us. We are offering another viewpoint to add to the millions of others out there. You don't have to agree with everything that we say, but hopefully we can make you think. The true spirit of rebellion in punk has been lost to the world of pop and fashion of late. As far as streetpunk goes, we are offering an alternative to the typical song subjects: drinking, nationalism, fighting, etc. Would we sell more records if we avoided controversial subjects? Certainly. But in the true spirit of punk, we would rather "stir the shit", so to speak.

Jon: We're not a bunch of guys who really like to have what we think or feel dictated to us, so we pretty much call 'em like we see 'em. We all have different views on some subjects, and we all respect each other's points of view. Usually.

MRR: Cranked Up! has been called a communist band before; does this trouble you?

Pat: It's funny that the type of person who calls us communists is usually an ignorant bonehead who doesn't know his ass from his/her own head. As for it bothering me? No. The way I look at it is, if they are talking about us, we are getting their attention. So we must be doing something right! If you want to call me a "commie", a "lefty", or a "queer", go right ahead. I look at the source it's coming from, and shit is always shit.

Andy: I get so entertained by this. People are quick to label, yet never read a lyric sheet. So we are Anti-Bush. So we sing about it - so fucking what! Does this mean we are commies? Apparently, if you have skinheads in the band and don't sing about worshipping the Right, or simply straddle the fence, you are a "lefty communist".

Did we like Kerry? No! Do we think the reasons for the Iraq war are bullshit? Yes! Do we think there is no place for racism in punk? Yes! Do we sing about it? Yes!

It's also amazing how, by being anti-fascist and singing about it, we are instantly branded as "communist".

Jon: I wish that whoever were the person that is saying that would call me up and define "communist" to me. How the fuck are we a commie band? The people who call us a commie band are lazy. They see a red t-shirt and want to point some fingers. I cannot say that I think communism hasn't been a threat in certain isolated parts of the world in the past 20 years - I think that the situation in Korea has been a little bit weird since the Cold War - but it's neither a creeping menace or a utopian paradise. I mean, you gotta be fucking kidding me! History has proved that many experiments in communism end up being just another model of government usually run by corrupt and megalomaniacal criminals. But then again, find me another political system that that description doesn't apply to!

MRR: Are each of your specific political leanings important in the band?

Pat: We all have pretty much the same political beliefs, in that we all recognize the oppression of the lower classes. Some of our views might differ on certain issues, but generally we are on the same wavelength. We would like to think we are the voice of the common man, the worker, the underdog, etc.

Andy: We hold our own views, yet welcome any debate people may have about our views. It's very important to keep an open mind. Every day, I see and experience things that change my perspective on the world.

MRR: Was this past year more important for you in helping people understand that they have a voice in the decision-making of this county?

Pat: Absolutely, some many people out there are just plain fucking dead weight. They let their brain just sit at home and rot and they believe everything they hear and see on TV. Luckily, we can say that a lot of young people are waking up and realizing that they don't have to follow the norm and just sit there quietly with their mouths shut. I think activism is more important now than ever. The majority of older people are already set in their ways, it's our job to educate the younger generations and encourage them to be more pro-active.

Andy: This is *your* country. It is not any more Bush, Kerry, or Bill Gates' country then it is yours. While overthrowing the government and spreading anarchy may not be realistic, or the right move, keep in mind that there is a lot that can be done to make this country better, and put it

more in the hands of the many, rather than the chosen few. People have to get educated and involved.

MRR: Is it important for you to get a message across to the listener in every song?

Pat: Well, to be honest, the message in punk is one of the things that had a great part in me becoming who I am and becoming a punk. I was inspired by old punk and hardcore bands musically, but the ones I could always relate to were the ones that had a social/political message in their lyrics, bands like Angelic Upstarts, the Oppressed, Newtown Neurotics, the Clash, and DRI. Those bands took a lot of heat for their stances. It's easy to be accepted when you sing nonsense sing-alongs that really don't pertain to anything. I feel like I can always put my message and views out there to be heard. People don't have to agree with my views, but at least I get an opportunity to express myself.

MRR: How has the punk scene helped you?

Pat: Everyday is something different. Twenty years in this scene can be an absolute eye-opener, I've been able to meet a lot of really inspiring people who have a great sense of conviction in what they are doing, but on another hand I've met a lot of wingnuts and scumbags. For some fucking reason, punk always attracts these losers.

Andy: Punk has helped me express my thoughts, has made me an individual, and has caused me to be an independent thinker. Additionally, it has exposed me to many places, lifestyles, and ideas, worldwide. It also has repeatedly put me in the poorhouse; I don't expect things to change anytime soon. As far as people go, punkrockers are the best, hands down.

MRR: Is it important for you to stay close to your fan base? How is it possible as that number grows?

Pat: You have to be true to yourself, first off. I like meeting new people and hearing what they have to say, that's how you learn. I know that I, for one, don't have all the same beliefs I had when I was younger. You gotta stay in touch with reality. As far as our fan base growing? The more the merrier, I welcome it.

Andy: I hope people will always be able to relate to us. We are all regular guys who come from the same places as anyone else. One of the great things about punk is that regular people like you and me can do it.

MRR: You are going to be touring on the West Coast in the fall, how do the crowds on the West Coast differ from those crowds closer to home?

Pat: I think they are basically the same. I think that the West Coast is kinda spoiled in a sense, mostly California, because there are so many shows. It seems like the appreciation is lost, which is not too much different than NYC. Every band comes through, so people generally get jaded. If you tour the Midwest, for example, and play in small towns that never get shows, I think there is a greater sense of appreciation. Although I must say that I do love Southern California and the Bay Are, there's such a sense of punk and hardcore history everywhere.

MRR: Do you care at all about commercial or economic success?

Pat: Commercial success is fine as long as you don't lose your sense of values and where you came from. Commercial success can change people. I've seen it. I want people to hear Cranked Up!'s message, but it's not my main concern if we are playing to 10 kids or 10,000.

As for economic success? It would be nice, but our punk ethics and love for the music definitely prevent us from intention of "selling out"!

MRR: Do you think that your particular style of music or the thoughts that are expressed in your songs limit large commercial success?

Sid: Absolutely!

MRR: There have been a few changes in the lineup. Is it hard when you introduce new people in the band?

Pat: Generally, it is hard work, but Sid played with Jason and me briefly when we were doing Violent Society, so we knew he would gel with us. I think this made the transition easier when he joined. Andy moved from bass to guitar, so that wasn't a big switch for him. We also felt adding Jon was good because it gave us a thicker sound for live shows.

MRR: What do you think of the poppier punk that is getting huge amounts of airtime on the radio?

Pat: I like some of it to a point. I mean I'd rather listen to some of it than classic rock.

Andy: I think there is barely any difference between most of those bands and the boy bands and Britney Spears, etc. Just because they are guitar- oriented and have punk influence doesn't mean that they aren't pre-fabricated bullshit bands constructed by record labels. It's just more industry crap, and these trendy bastards will be forgot, just like most of the stuff that makes up the Billboard charts. You'll find that the artists recognized for being true innovators and visionaries almost never found themselves at the top of the charts. And, fuck you Pat, I love classic rock!

MRR: Your new album is *This is a Weapon*. How do you think it measures up to your *Call for Solidarity* EP?

Pat: Lyrically and musically, it's the best thing any of us has done to date. Years of frustration really helped us put out a super record. This album gave me a lot of optimism that I usually don't have. I'm generally a pretty negative person.

MRR: Do you feel like your songs evolve a lot as you tour and meet more people?

Pat: I think a person's taste in music evolves more on tour. You are seeing three or four bands a night, on average. You get to see what new bands are up to and you are exposed to new ideas.

MRR: What inspires you?

Pat: Restrictions.

MRR: Do you feel as though you still have a lot to say?

Pat: Absolutely. Every day is something new, you take life and roll with it.

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CONGA
FURY

Conga Fury, from Shikoku, Japan have been playing a style of blazing hardcore they've coined "C-Beat" for the past four years. I caught up with them recently to discuss Kochi drinking customs and their international reputation for nudity. We even had time to touch upon their involvement in the Japanese hardcore scene. Interview and translation by Kevin Hunt.

Oden [vocals
Ryuji [drums]
Riidaa [bass]
Yoshio [guitar]

MRR: WHEN DID YOU START PLAYING TOGETHER AS CONGA FURY?
Oden: We got together in 2001 and played our first show that summer.
MRR: WAS YOUR FIRST SHOW IN YOUR HOMETOWN OF KOCHI?
Oden: Yes, it was.
MRR: DO YOU OFTEN PLAY AROUND JAPAN?
Oden: Yeah, about once or twice a month.
Yoshio: If we get an offer of a gig somewhere we'll take it up.
MRR: YOU SEEMED TO HAVE DONE QUITE A FEW SHOWS AROUND THE PLACE RECENTLY, AM I RIGHT?
Oden: Here have a look at this flier, it's got our most recent dates on it.
MRR: TOKYO, NAGOYA, HIROSHIMA, KOCHI, KYOTO, MATSUYAMA, OSAKA, KOBE, NISHIWAKI—YOU GET AROUND! SO ANYWAY, TELL US ABOUT THE SCENE IN KOCHI.
Yoshio: Disclose, Blind Sniper and we are the most active Kochi bands.
MRR: WHAT'S THE MOST NOTICEABLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PLAYING IN TOKYO AND PLAYING IN KOCHI?
Yoshio: I'm worn out when I play in Tokyo because I've had a long drive from Kochi! Other than that, it doesn't really matter whether we play in Kochi or the USA, we still give it our all. I'd hate to think that we try any harder or put in less effort due to the location of the gig. Wherever we play, we give it 100%.
Oden: I feel equally nervous, wherever we play!
MRR: HOW MANY RELEASES DO YOU HAVE OUT SO FAR?
Yoshio: If you were to include all of our compilation appearances, over twenty. Our latest release is our third 7" titled *Love Noise*. Our second album is in the works and will be coming out on Six Weeks Records. That was recorded over summer.
MRR: WHO DOES YOUR COVER ART? IS IT ALWAYS THE SAME PERSON?
Yoshio: A cartoonist named Kubonouchi Esaku. He is also from Kochi.
MRR: DOES HE DO MANGA ART FOR ANY COMIC BOOKS OR OTHER BANDS?
Yoshio: Yeah, well he's actually a professional manga artist. I think that we're the only band he does artwork for.
MRR: HAS HE WRITTEN/DRAWN ANY FAMOUS MANGA?
Yoshio: His most famous comic is *Tsudomoku Dokushin Ryo*.
Oden: I think that a lot of people would know that comic.
MRR: WHEN DID YOU ALL START PLAYING HARDCORE?
Ryuji: When I started playing in Conga Fury.
Riidaa: When I was about 20 years old.
Oden: Like Ryuji, when I started playing in this band.
Yoshio: From when I was 25 playing in Judgement Disorderly and then later I played in a band called Waves. I played in a bunch of other bands, too.
MRR: WHEN DID YOU TOUR THE US?
Yoshio: That was in July, 2003.
MRR: HOW WAS THE TOUR?
Oden: It was a lot of fun!
MRR: WHAT SPECIFICALLY DID YOU ENJOY ABOUT IT?
Ryuji: Playing at Gilman Street and the in-store show at Mission Records was a blast.
Oden: I loved playing inside the Pizzeria!
MRR: DID THE CROWD GET INTO YOU?
Yoshio: It depended on where we played.
Oden: A lot of crazy things happened. Stuff getting totally destroyed. Still great memories!
MRR: HOW WAS IT DIFFERENT TO PLAYING IN JAPAN?
Oden: What really surprised me was the general absence of sound checks. Also, people loading gear into all kinds of places that weren't necessarily "venues," and playing sets.
MRR: WHAT WAS THE AGE RANGE OF THE PEOPLE ATTENDING THE GIGS?
Oden: Well, there were lots of young people at the

all-ages shows, as you'd expect.

MRR: WHO DID YOU TOUR WITH?

Oden: Chainsaw, also from Japan, and Vöestek from California.

MRR: WHO SET UP THE TOUR FOR YOU?

Yoshio: The people at Six Weeks Records. They also put out releases by Chainsaw and us and were kind enough to set up the tour.

MRR: DO YOU PLAN TO DO ANY OTHER OVERSEAS TOURS IN THE NOT-SO-DISTANT FUTURE?

Yoshio: You know, we get quite a few offers but unfortunately we are so busy with our jobs that it's kinda tough to accept them. We'd really love to go but realistically, we can't.

Oden: Overseas tours are not so easy to pull off while we're working.

MRR: ODEN, YOU WRITE THE LYRICS, RIGHT? TELL US ABOUT YOUR LYRICAL CONTENT.

Oden: Well, the rest of the band writes the song first and I listen to the song and write lyrics inspired by the feeling I get from the music. The lyrics are usually about however I feel or whatever I'm thinking about that particular moment in time.

MRR: HOW ABOUT YOUR MOST RECENT MATERIAL?

Oden: The recent lyrics are about dramatic things and about love!

MRR: HAVE YOU FALLEN IN LOVE?

Oden: Yep, just recently. *(laughter)*

MRR: THAT'S WONDERFUL! ANY POLITICALLY-CHARGED LYRICS?

Oden: A few anti-war songs. Actually, Yoshio penned the lyrics to a couple of songs on the latest 7".

MRR: TELL US ABOUT YOUR JOBS. WHAT KIND OF WORK DO YOU DO?

Oden: I've got a new job where I'm making/repairing futons. By night I work in a hostess bar. Kevin, you'll have to stop by there for a drink some time! *(laughter)*

Riidaa: I work for an insurance company.

Ryuji: I work for Mizuno sports equipment.

Yoshio: I run my record and clothes shop.

MRR: WHAT ARE CONGA FURY'S GOALS AS A BAND?

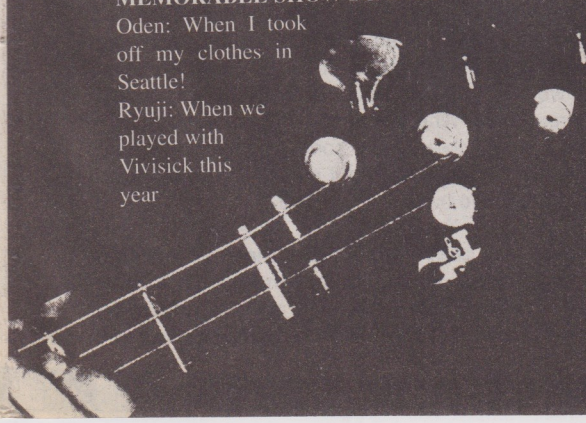
Yoshio: To have fun playing and to keep playing for a long time.

Oden: To make sure those who come and see us have a great time.

MRR: WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR MOST MEMORABLE SHOW SO FAR?

Oden: When I took off my clothes in Seattle!

Ryuji: When we played with Vivisick this year at their Tokyo event in January.



MRR: YOSHIO, YOU'VE BEEN GOING TO SHOWS AND PLAYING HARDCORE FOR A GOOD NUMBER OF YEARS. HOW HAS THE JAPANESE HARDCORE SCENE CHANGED FROM WHEN YOU GOT INVOLVED UP UNTIL PRESENT DAY?

Yoshio: Some contemporary Japanese bands have been able to mix different styles, overcoming barriers imposed by particular genres of hardcore very well. Band-wise, things are good throughout the scene. Nowadays, all kinds of bands playing different styles of hardcore are playing shows together. It used to be that "crusty" bands would only ever play gigs with other "crusty" bands and "Japacore" bands would only play with other "Japacore" bands. There is more diversity and merging of bands now. I don't, however, feel that this is the case with the punters who go and watch the gigs, buy the records, etc. I don't really think that these people have made the same progression as the actual bands have. Playing in a band and running a record shop I get a very strong sense of that.

MRR: ANYONE ELSE CARE TO SHARE OR ELABORATE ON THAT?

Riidaa: We're all too young to comment!

MRR: How old are you guys?

Oden: I'm 25.

Ryuji: 25, too.

Riidaa: 29.

(pause)

Yoshio:…I'm 38.

MRR: CAN YOU RECOMMEND ANY GOOD NEW(ISH) JAPANESE BANDS TO THE FOREIGN READERS?

Yoshio: Evee.

Oden: They're from Fukuoka.

Yoshio: Anoto from Tokyo. To be honest, I think that we have a pretty high standard of hardcore here in Japan. You should pretty much listen to anything you can get your hands on.

MRR: ALRIGHT, HOW ABOUT OLDER, ESSENTIAL BANDS?

Yoshio: GISM are a *must* listen. I think that Japanese hardcore from the 1980s has had a pretty big influence. If you are at all interested in Japanese hardcore, then it's important that you get to know the classic bands from the 80s.

Oden: Deathside.

Riidaa: Blind Sniper from Kochi.

Ryuji: I love Guitar Wolf.

MRR: I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT KOCHI DRINKING CULTURE. ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO, MY OLD BAND PLAYED IN KOCHI AND ODEN, YOU TOOK US TO A BIG OLD-FASHIONED IZAKAYA (DRINKING HALL) THAT WAS SLIGHTLY OUT OF TOWN. YOU HAD AN INTERESTING STYLE OF DRINKING THERE, COULD YOU TELL US ABOUT THAT?

Oden: Oh, you mean "henpai."

Yoshio: "Henpai" conveys the notion that you want to give your friend or a guest a drink from your own cup. They drain the glass when you give it to them, refill it and give it back to you. Then you down it. It's all about comradery.

MRR: GOOD STUFF. WINDING DOWN, WHO CAN PEOPLE GET HOLD OF YOUR STUFF FROM OVERSEAS?

Yoshio: Well, any label that has released our stuff will probably have it still available. Try Six Weeks, 625 Thrashcore, or Lengua Armada.

MRR: ANY FINAL COMMENTS?

Oden: We want lots of people to listen to us!

Yoshio: Special thanks to Chris Dodge for listening to our dreadful demo CD-R and still offering us a release on Slap-A-Ham. There were big problems with the master tape and so it didn't happen, but thanks anyway. When we had finally sorted the problem out, Slap-A-Ham had closed shop, unfortunately but lucky for us Six Weeks Records put it out for us at a later date. Thanks, Jeff and Athena.

Discography 2001-2005

Natural Noise 2001 (Demo CD-r)

V/A – *Human Stench Comp Volume II* (Human Stench, USA)

Chaotic Noise LP (Six Weeks/Slap-A-Ham, USA)

V/A – *Chi O Suu Yakara* (Bloodsucker Records, Japan)

Split 7"EP with Crunky Kids (Hibachi Records, USA)

3-way split 10" Conga Fury/Chainsaw/Vöestek *West Coast Bullshit Disaster* (625 Thrashcore, USA)

V/A 3xLP *A Reason for Living 2003* (Dan Doh Records, Japan)

V/A *Histeria II* (Lengua Armada, USA)

Split Demo with Godfree – *God Fury* (Terro-Rhythm, Japan)

4-way split – *Terro-Rythym Vol.I* (Terro-Rhythm/Dan Doh, Japan)

V/A *Tonight I'm Gonna Rock You* (Skinny Dip Records, Japan)

Split 7" EP with The Nitz (Complete Distort, USA)

7" EP *Bullshit Disaster* (Crucial Records, USA)

V/A *Short, Fast & Loud Comp* (6 Weeks Records, USA)

V/A 7"EP *Koroshi No Omunibasu* (Koroshi No Records, Japan)

Cassette – *C-Beat Selection* (Broken Bones Records, Russia)

4-way split – *Terro-Rhythm Vol. II* (Terro-Rhythym/ Dan Doh, Japan)

7"EP *World Peace* (Answer Records, Japan)

4-way split *Terro-Rhythm Vol. III* (Terro-Rhythm/Dan Doh, Japan)

V/A *Shikoku Raw Punk Compilation* (Terro-Rhythm/Dan Doh, Japan)

Split 7"EP with George Harrison (Broken Bones Records, Russia)

V/A *Planting a Seed – A Compilation to Benefit Parkinson's Disease Research* (De Rok, USA)

7"EP *Love Noise* (Koroshi No Records, Japan)

Coming Soon – 2nd LP/CD on Six Weeks Records (USA)

URRKE T. & THE MIDLIFE CRISIS

With one 7" on Bootleg Booze Records under their belts, the long-time Swedish punkers in Urrke T. & the Midlife Crisis talk about the desire to play punk rock, the continued relevance of old punk lyrics, and whether or not they'll ever actually play live. Interview by Andreas.

MRR: Alright, let us begin. Who are you, what do you do, and why do you do the thing you do? Give us a short introduction.
My name is Urrke T. I play the bass guitar and do the lead vocals in a constellation called Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis. Why do I do it? I guess I fuckin' have to! I also play the bass in the band Mary Slim and I guess that Midlife Crisis is my playground, where I, together with three friends, can do whatever the fuck we want just for fun. We play some real *Punk rock shit*! We have so far only released one 7", but it's a killer 7"!

MRR: Besides the fact that it's three killer tunes, what was it that made you chose those particular three? I mean, there must have been loads of ideas on songs to do. What makes these stand out?
They are three of my favorite songs of all time and I feel that they have always been a little left behind and forgotten. Among younger people they have probably never even been heard or discovered at all. There are of course 1000s of more songs like that (which is on the other hand a guarantee for doing some more recordings) but these were the first three to come to my mind.

MRR: Are there any tracks you'd love to do but fear you won't do justice? Why?
Well, there are a lot of songs I would love to do. Actually, the songs that are the most simple are the ones that are most hard to do something good with. Once (late 80s) I played the drums in a Glamrock band called King Size and we tried to cover Slaughter & The Dogs "Boston Babies," which is a great song. When we tried it, it just sounded boring, because it's such a simple three-chord song, and we didn't manage to "make it come alive" if you see what I mean? I'm sure Midlife Crisis would make it though. We have the right spirit.

MRR: You're obviously very busy people, what made you decide to add yet another task to your already busy schedules?
I had been talking and thinking about recording a single with some songs I really like for a few years time. I had even given these three

specific songs to the drummer and guitar player of the band Satirnine, who are good, and close friends. But we didn't seem to hit it off for some reason. Then the Hellacopters had a short break and I asked Robert if he wanted to play the drums. So he did and he also said that our mutual friend Måns of the Maggots probably would be interested in joining the project. In a phone call with Dregen I told him what we were gonna do and he also wanted to take part. In the end we found ourselves to be the perfect match. We didn't even rehearse. We just went in the studio and recorded the fuckin' songs.

MRR: Does Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis consist of steady band members? I mean, you're all busy as we talked about, and it was never really decided who would be in the band. What would happen if the opportunity comes up for a recording session and one of the four guys on this 7" isn't available?
Midlife Crisis as far as I'm concerned consists of Me, Måns, Dregen, and Robert. If someone isn't available we will wait. We have no career ambitions with this band. It's for fun. Maybe *if* we ever do any live gigs we would bring in another bass player so that I could concentrate on the vocals. But as you know, nobody knows if that is even gonna happen.

MRR: The choice of labels to release the 7" fell on Bootleg Booze Records, why?
Because I know those guys and I know that they put out records for the same reasons that makes Midlife Crisis record, which is to have a good time and do cool and neat stuff.

MRR: The front cover is an obvious tribute to the Heartbreakers and goes well with the theme of the 7". But it really doesn't have anything to do with the music on the record. A story behind this?
We didn't know exactly how the cover was gonna look like when we entered the studio. One idea was to take a photo with the Swedish, American, and English flags as backdrops, to represent the origins of the three songs. Nobody except me liked that idea though. Dregen came up with the idea to do the Heartbreakers/*Please Kill Me*-rip off photo. "Lets go to a secondhand shop and get four cheap white shirts," he said. So we did. I came up with the splendid idea of getting a plastic bag full of free ketchup from McDonalds. Mickey Rip who owns the Acetone studio took the photo with his digital camera. So we actually did the recording, mixing, and cover photo in two day, and almost for nothing. Punk rock alright!

MRR: Are there any plans on getting together for some live shows or is this a hobby/studio band only?
I was mentioning it earlier and I don't know if plans are the right word really. Since everybody—especially Dregen and Robert—are so busy with their other acts, it is very hard to have any plans at all. Which in a way is very punk rock also. We have gotten offers to play all around Sweden already, and we have gotten offers to do tours in Italy, Spain, and Finland. All of it would be very cool of course, but we have never even rehearsed; we only have three songs and everybody is busy all the time. It was fuckin' hard to get all four of us in the studio the same day. And that was only one friggin' day, you know what I'm saying? But...everybody wants to do at least one show! So, we'll see what the future brings

MRR: Why do you think people wanna hear old songs done by a whole other band? What do you yourselves like about covers?
I *don't* think people *want* to hear it. I just want to *do* it. And as I think it's a cool thing. I think that everybody who happens to hear it will like it. If they don't, tough shit, heh... It's just something I wanted to do to have some fun. It's not pretentious fuckin' rubbish. It's just ten minutes of good fun and rock 'n' roll. Also, it would probably have felt quite useless both for us and for people who listened if we covered well known songs by the Clash, the Ramones, and the Sex Pistols, right? Not because they're not good, but because everybody has heard it already so it would only be boring. That's my idea of playing good covers. Dusting off some old, forgotten rough diamonds who deserve to be remembered just because they're so damned good. These songs feel like a part of my life that I wanna reveal and immortalize or something.

MRR: Urrke, you have been a part of the Swedish punk rock scene for some time now. What's your opinion of it? How, in your opinion, has it evolved or devolved during the years?
I'll answer this briefly. The punk rock scene from the beginning was one scene alone. Now it is a thousand different scenes. You've got anarcho punk, hardcore punk, '77 punk, melodic punk, garage punk, metal punk, etc. I still don't care about any scene but the scene that is simply called the punk rock scene. And in that scene I think there's room for everything from the Stooges to Suicide to the Sex Pistols to Bad Brains, etc. I like punk rock. That's it.

MRR: Do you think the Swedish scene has had an impact around the world? If so, in what way?
Yes I think it has, in many ways. Swedish punk has affected the scene in different ways during different periods. The early Swedish punk rock scene with bands like Warheads, The Pain, Ebba Grön, Usch, Kriminella Gitarrer, PF Commando, Bugs, The Rude Kids, Bitch Boys, etc. (I can go on forever) made a substantial impact mainly in Scandinavia I think. What has proved to have a massive impact around the world is obviously the much later Scandinavian scene.

MRR: Some claim punk and politics go hand in hand, some claim punk is simply about the individual right to whatever they want to, and some that it's just a big "fuck off!" to just about everything. Where do you stand on this? You do after all have a very relevant commentary on today's situation, even though it's some 20 years old, in the cover of "The American in Me." You chose to name the record after this track and include the lyrics.
Punk is what you choose it to be for you. For me, punk means to think for yourself, decide for yourself, and to ignore all conventions and prejudices that society uses to put you down and make you a quiet, grey, little mouse that is totally harmless for those who make all the fucking rules. Punk is to scream instead of shut up, punk is doing everything to be seen and heard instead of having no identity and no opinions. Punk is to provoke what is the norm, because the norm might not always be the best. Punk is to question everything, especially what is established. Punk is to be a rebel without a cause. Regarding the lyrics in the Avengers song "The American In Me"—we all think it is remarkably scary that nothing has happened with corruption, especially in the United States of America (and the rest of the world in general for that sake). The words written by Penelope Houston almost 30 years ago are not only as relevant, but even *more* relevant today than back in 1978! That says a lot about what a sick world we are living in. And it shouldn't need to be sick. But it gets regularly fucked up by powerful assholes like George W. Bush and his likes.

MRR: OK, just a quick grill to see where you stand, and to blow life into some old interview classics. First off, Vinyl or CD?
Well, why do you think our single is available only on vinyl? Vinyl is better in all ways! It sounds better, it's more alive and multidimensional, it looks better, the sleeves are bigger and more interesting, and it even smells better!
MRR: Best concert ever?
That is tricky, but Joan Jett & The Blackhearts in Borlänge, Sweden 1985 was magical!
MRR: One record everyone needs to own?
The Sex Pistols *Never Mind the Bollocks.*
MRR: A movie that has to be seen?
The Fisher King.
MRR: Favorite book?
Tricky again. I have so many. John Steinbecks *East Of Eden* maybe? Or anything by Charles Bukowski.

MRR: All right, we'll end this with those tips from you. Thank you very much for taking the time to do this interview and feel free to add anything you wish.
Well thank *you*! Thanks to everybody who has taken the time to read this interview and hopefully will go to their local dealer or on the Internet to buy our record! And watch out for the second coming! Hope to see you all somewhere sometime. You rule! Stay sick! Live young & die hard!

"The history of Puerto Rico is the history of all colonized people"
—Howard Zinn

First inhabited by native Taino Indians prior to the Spanish Invasion, Puerto Rico has been witness to many horrors through its ugly history. Puerto Rico is the story of all colonized people, it's the story of the same horrors that plagued Latin America and exploited people everywhere. It has seen its share of revolts, genocide, slave labor, plundering, invasion, bombings, and betrayal. First a colony of Spain for hundreds of years and later ceded to the US after the Spanish American war, Puerto Rico still remains as one of the last colonies in the western hemisphere, a blatant symbol of US imperialism and arrogance. Here we interview Tropiezo, a HC band from San Juan, Puerto Rico, who just toured the US this past summer. Interview and introduction by Lucho

TROPIEZO

MRR: Please introduce yourselves and tell us what you do in the band.

Wallo: Hi, I am Wallo and I play bass

Javier: I scream.

Oscar: I play drums.

Jose: Hello, I am Jose and I play guitar.

MRR: OK, I guess the first real question would be about the history of the band. Tell us a little bit about how you guys met, how long the band has been around, and who is left from the original line up.

Jose: I met Javier in the mid 90s, we had a band called Socialmente Muertos. When that band ended in 1997 that's when we decided to start Tropiezo. Around that time is when we met Wallo.

Oscar: I met these guys shortly after they started back in '97; we all eventually became part of the same group of close friends. I started playing with Tropiezo about three years ago. I am the only non-original member.

MRR: What are some of the goals/objectives of the band?

Javier: We use this as an outlet to get our ideals across, to denounce everything that happens around us in our reality here in Puerto Rico.

Wallo: We want to keep recording, touring, and continuing to build bridges with other communities.

Oscar: I am pretty satisfied with what we've done so far. I am proud of what we've accomplished. I hope we can continue to do this for a long time and in the process continue to meet people that share our ideas and build solidarity.

Jose: To continue to do what we set out to do since day one, continue with our ideals and keep moving forward, doing things by ourselves, staying critical of the status quo.

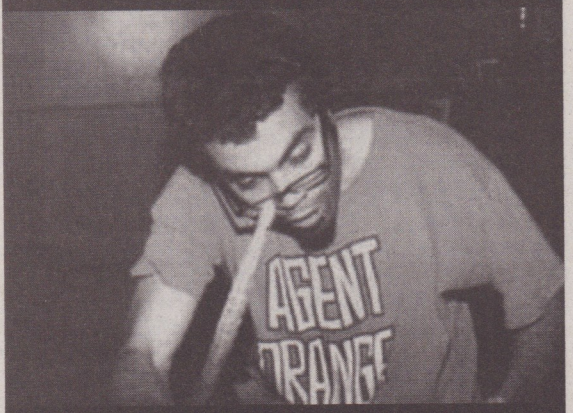
MRR: We know that from '93-'00 Puerto Rico had an ultra-right conservative governor Pedro Rosello, who not only pushed for English to be an official language in PR but who also wanted to begin the process of making Puerto Rico the 51st state. Can you please tell us about the current political situation in Puerto Rico? What are people's attitudes towards the current situation? Do people still have hope in electoral politics?

Javier: Well, let me first begin with saying this—there has never been a non-conservative, non ultra-right governor in Puerto Rico. All of them have been pieces of shit puppets of the US, including our current governor. The language thing is something the imperialists have always had on their mind since they invaded this island.

Depending on what party is governing the subject of language is touched more or less—if the Partido Popular Democratico wins (which is the party who supports the current status of "free associated state") the subject is not talked about much, but if the Partido Nuevo Progresista wins (the party of Rosello that you mentioned) English is number one priority. About the people having trust in their leaders, I am sad to say that the situation here is critical, people seem to overlook fraud, corruption, poverty and all this issues. Year after year, Puerto Ricans still come out in great numbers—97-98%—to vote! Its ridiculous! The situation here gets worse and worse; we have a lot of things that concern us like education, health care, political status, and narco-trafficking. The Puerto Rican economy is strangled by the US—for example, due to laws installed by the US we are not allowed to transport our products or negotiate with any other country unless its through the navy of the US (the most expensive in the world) bringing very little profits to the country and drowning the economy. Of course, this only benefits the government of the US, the ruling class, the great multinationals that set up shop here, and their impresarios. It's an obscenity that people still vote!

Oscar: Unfortunately, it's a product of ignorance. We're very apathetic. Puerto Ricans in general seem not to give a shit, people don't seem to mind to vote for their master, judge, and executioner. When people complain, it seems to end with that—just complaining. This attitude towards our current situation is absurd. People talk the usual shit with their families and friends but there is never the initiative to organize. People don't even really know the politics of the parties they are voting for, let alone try to have one of their own.

Wallo: The Puerto Rican politician is the worst kind of swine there is, like all politicians we have never had any that represents our interests. The election process in Puerto Rico is very dirty. Fraud and corruption are rampant, you see these pigs taking advantage of people all the time—they go to the shanty-towns and give away big screen TVs and refrigerators (that they most likely got for free anyways) in exchange for votes. The worst thing about this is that people actually buy this shit—they swallow all this bullshit, and you see the numbers of people that go out and vote—97-98%. It's absurd! They vote for the same clone, the same rehashed, recycled ideas. Some actually trying to connect to the youth said that if we became the 51st state that Americans would embrace us our language and our culture. That if we became a state we could be just a Spanish speaking state. Are you fucking kidding me?? Rednecks are shooting Mexicans at the border! What the hell you think they are going to do to us!?



MRR: I got the impression that five or six years ago there was momentum building up in Puerto Rico, with more activity and participation of Puerto Ricans in progressive political movements, the independence movement etc. Was the bombing of Vieques crucial to this?

Jose: Right now the independence movement in Puerto Rico is made up of the cremme de le cremme of intellectuals and not the actual proletariat. Vieques was one of the issues that did bring worldwide attention to Puerto Rico. It seemed to unify the country and for whatever reasons they had, most people united for this cause. There were massive daily demonstrations and it got a lot of media coverage. I guess people felt that the bombing of one of the worlds most beautiful beaches, and the radiation and pollution left behind was something everyone could agree to unite around no matter what political background you had.

Javier: The actual party right now that represents the ideology of Puerto Rican independence functions like any other right wing party. They are more concerned with their own power and franchise than the real problems in Puerto Rico, and with how to lead a society that understands the oppression and abuses of not just the US government but of local authorities also. The Puerto Rican left now is made up of, like Jose said, a selected elite of intellectuals with washed up ideas and a weak concept of what independence actually means.

Oscar: I think the whole Viequez thing sparked some nationalism in everybody, but I don't think most saw the bigger picture. After the US Navy left Viequez that movement died. Its like all that mattered was Viequez—they didn't seem to mind that the US navy, army, air force, and government were everywhere else on the island. Some Puerto Ricans think that we receive a lot from the US and that we give nothing back, but were losing a lot more that we are aware of. And receiving a lot less than you might think.

Wallo: The struggle of Viequez is something that's been going on for 60 plus years, yet only in the past five to six years did people realize what a great mess it was and still is. Somebody had to be killed for people to take action. At first people were outraged, but since we have no voice in the decisions made by the US government it is an uphill fight. Eventually the navy left, leaving behind a trail of pollution, dead seas, and cancer all over a small island off the east coast of Puerto Rico.

MRR: Do you guys consider yourselves "independentistas"?

Javier: I believe in the independence of Puerto Rico, and the independence from all oppression. I believe in the power of people to decide their own destinies, but it's a long, hard struggle we must wage.

Jose: I believe in the liberation of all nations and

human beings, but I am not an independentista. I have worked with several independentistas newspapers and it's a movement of the elite that I don't want to be part of.

Oscar: I am not a patriot at all, so I don't see Puerto Rico should be independent for all those poetic romantic bullshit reasons, I am an anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist, I am against all countries and people being treated like property—not just Puerto Ricans. I don't really identify with the current independence movement; you need a lot more than poetry and romanticism to accomplish independence.

Wallo: I think of my self as somebody that sympathizes with the idea of Puerto Rico as an independent nation, but I don't affiliate my self with the political party that favors independence for the island. The one who systematically vouch for independence are the same political fat cats that exploit and steal from the people they claim to represent.

MRR: Do you think that a great majority of the Puerto Rican people identify with the American culture?

Jose: Of course! You see it through our society at all levels. Even in the punk scene, so many bands want to sound like trendy American bands and sing in English. It makes me sick.

Javier: American culture is the most successful thing that the US government has marketed and sold to the Puerto Rican people.

Oscar: Definitely. Its crazy because here from the day you're born they feed you this pride of being Puerto Rican and patriotism and all that crap, but at the same time everybody glorifies everything that comes from the US and looks down on everything that comes from Puerto Rico. Except for athletes, beauty queens, entertainers, or anything else that's relatively superficial. Everybody is soooo proud of being Puerto Rican yet they seek to imitate anything that's not Puerto Rican. At the same time its inevitable to be influenced by American culture here, 'cause it's everywhere. The stores in all the malls are mostly American. There is an American fast food place in every corner, cable TV, American flags, American gas stations, American hardware stores, cars, food brands, American everything! Kids here don't know who Pedro Albizo is but they sure know who Ronald McDonald is. It's sad but that's how people have learned to live here. Forced to assimilate.

Wallo: American culture for the most part is very consumer friendly, and us Puerto Ricans love to shop in vast quantities, so we're the perfect target.

MRR: I heard you guys made headlines all over the island and got in some controversy over a TV show? What happened?

Jose: (laughs) Well, we were invited by a friend of ours to play live on some show at some station where he was doing an internship. It was supposed to be a program about culture, and they wanted a band to play. So Javier got on the mike and started expressing his ideas about certain senators and legislators and chiefs of police and I think he called the new pope a Nazi (laughs). He was basically just going off on everything and they cut us off the air and shut our mics off. The next day there were pictures of us on all the local newspapers and stuff like that. Obviously, if they're going to give us a chance to be on TV we're going to say stuff like that—we weren't going to let a chance like that pass.

Oscar: Ironically the show aired on public television, which is obviously control by the government. I guess that's censorship.

Wallo: We had fun at that show, we pissed some people off.

MRR: A lot of people don't know too much about the DIY HC punk scene in Puerto Rico. Could you tell us briefly about its history and about the current bands, labels zines that exist now?

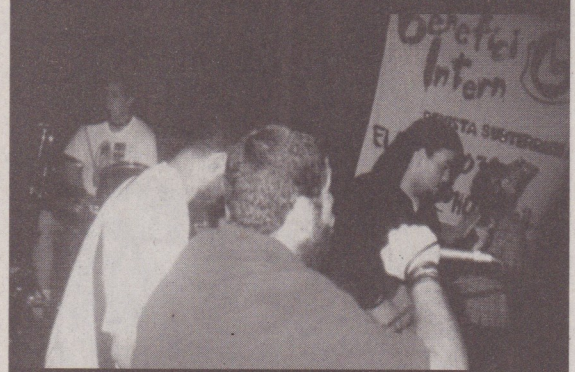
Jose: Well, hardcore, punk, and ska have existed here since the late 80s, from that scene only one band is still around, Golpe Justo. Around 1993 this guy from NY called Jeff Spazz (I think) released a series of 7"s from Puerto Rican bands like Shampain, Golpe Justo, Fobia Estatal, and a comp. He also released a video comp of Puerto Rican bands. I wasn't really in the scene back then—I was kinda young. From that era very there are few people left. Right now, there are three DIY labels in PR. I do a label called Discos de Hoy. Another label that releases besides punk and release some hip-hop and ska and other alternative music is called El Bulto De Los Tapes. Another label that recently started distroing a lot of good stuff is called Antitodo Zine Y Distro, which put out a great zine also. About bands—there's about 100 bands right now, everything from HC to grind, ska, punk, and emo. Most of them try to stay independent and do things in an independent way. I am not going to name them all but some of my favorites are Actitud Suversiva, Golpe Justo, Un Final Fatal, Espectros, La Experiencia, and Cojoba. You can also check out www.prhc.org that functions now mostly like a message board but there's a lot of info.

MRR: Cojoba rules! Taina does a great zine also.

Jose: Cojoba is great, though I don't think Taina does her zine anymore.

MRR: I know you guys put out most of your own stuff, do you have future projects with other people?

Jose: We've put out several split CDs with friends like Actitud Suversiva from Puerto Rico and Opus Dead from Madrid, Spain. We just put out a split 7" with the band Outraged from California on Punks Before Profits label from NY. We also would like to put out a split CD by the end of this year with our friends La Armada Roja from the Dominican Republic. You can find more info on that scene by going here: www.punkdominicano.com. And we would also would like to put out our second full-length eventually. There are also other projects in the works that aren't totally concrete yet but will be in the future.



MRR: I was about to ask you if you had connections with other scenes in the Caribbean. Do you have contacts with other scenes besides the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean? Cuba? Jamaica?

Jose: We only have contacts with the Dominican scene, we have a great friendship with many DR punx. We hope to go play there in December. I know there is a scene in Cuba but have no contact.

MRR: What bands have come to Puerto Rico?

Oscar: A lot of bands have come here—unfortunately most of them are crappy metal core tough guy HC bands, but also a lot good DIY bands like Sin Dios, La Polla, La Armada Roja, Opus Dead, Reincidentes, Czolgosz, and others.

MRR: Last year you guys did a brief tour of the East Coast of the US. How did it go? Was it what you expected? How did people respond?

Wallo: We had a blast, every show was great regardless if 100 people showed up or 30. Everywhere we went people looked out for us. For that, we're very grateful—we made new friends and played with killer bands.

Javier: I liked how kids tried to interact with us regardless of the language barrier, we had a great time, we played basements—it was great! You don't see that here.

Oscar: We thought the Latino shows were going to be crazier but it was actually about the same—the American kids responded just the same and the language barrier didn't seem to bother them.

MRR: Where else have you guys toured?

All: We've toured Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Mexico twice. And now we've toured the United States twice.

MRR: Any last words?

Oscar: Thanx for the interview Lucho. We encourage kids to come up and talk and interact with us, exchange ideas, stories, music, contacts whatever. We have another band called Juventud Crasa, who we did our last US tour with. It's basically our side project, with almost same members of Tropiezo though it's more punk rock and less HC. Saludos!

All: Salud! Cheers!

TROPIEZO INFO:
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Discosdehoy~yahoo.com
www.myspace.com/tropiezo
Jose Ibanes Caile, 4, C-5 Parque Montebello
Trujillo Alto,
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BABOON of SICKNESS fanzine

Throughout the 1980's the Detroit landscape was littered with inept, poorly produced yet always ravenously read fanzines. Every local record store was overflowing with independent publications that sought to, not only inform, but act as catalyst. One magazine that emerged from beneath the stacks of offset and xeroxed mountains was Gorilla of Death. *Formed in 1985 by arch-enemies Todd, The Weird Buckaroo, and Johan Tiberius, G.O.D., it served only one master...itself.*

Over the next decade Gorilla of Death *and its creators, would come to battle everything from school boards to newspapers. The brash, ignorant, and violent overtone was only overwhelmed by its quick-witted and irreverent humor. Alas, as* Gorilla of Death *celebrated its fourteen year anniversary both Weird and Johan parted ways in a quest for what many consider a downward vortex of alcoholism and adulthood.*

...which brings us to the present. As recently as last year I started hearing rumors that a new "fanzine" had hit the stands and that it was "the grossest and most vile" piece of printed material ever. I instantly remembered the days of Gorilla of Death *and longed for the time when the simple written word could insight people to really feel at a deep-cored emotional level...even if that feeling was one of disgust. To my surprise I heard that the magazine was called* Baboon of Sickness. *I could have only believed that someone was reprinting old* Gorilla of Death's *under a new name. Shockingly, and to my great surprise, I was wrong.*

Baboon of Sickness *is the demented step-child of* Gorilla of Death, *written and published solely by former* Gorilla of Death *creator Johan Tiberius. It returns to a time when you were allowed to be politically incorrect, when you could really say anything you wanted to. One year and ten issues into his return to publishing I met with Johan at a local bar and asked him about some of the changes that have occurred since his first foray into fanzination over twenty years ago. Interview by Rich Gardner*

MRR: It's been a long time, almost seven years, since you've published a fanzine. I guess the main questions are: what have you been doing and why the return to publishing?

JT: Well, after Todd and I parted company I needed a chance to take everything I'd been learning and put it into practice. I opened a local hangout where kids could just sit around and get away from the problems of being a kid; that eventually got closed down. I ran for mayor of my hometown and flipped the "old-boys network" of local politicos on their heads. I never stopped writing though. I wrote a couple of novels, op-ed pieces here and there and I continue to lecture all over the country on government conspiracies. As to why I started *Baboon of Sickness,* well I guess it's because I got fed up with the apathy and fake expression of emotions from people I was encountering day to day. In our world where anyone can get online and type "Teen Horse Vagina" and instantly see more photos then they can imagine, there becomes a driving desensitization that uniformly overwhelms the masses of the earth. I wanted to see if it was still possible to say things that would make people feel some kind, any kind of true emotion.

MRR: So do you think the main difference between people now and 22 years ago is that they have too much information and so they become bored with it?

JT: Information has always been possible to get for a person who wants it. The problem is that when you know that information is easily available you care less about it. It's always been that way. When someone gives you something, over you working for it and earning it, it has less of a value to you.

MRR: *Baboon of Sickness* is much less music driven than some of your former fanzines—is that due to lack of honest, hardworking bands?

JT: Not at all. The early eighties was just a great time for a kid, back then, like me to do a fanzine. Every weekend you were going to clubs to see The Circle Jerks, The Dead Kennedys, Crucifucks, Descendents etc. and they were all doing something at those shows that was outrageous and unexpected so people wanted to know about it. There are a ton of bands these days that are awesome and hardworking but again there is so much information on bands, fan-based websites, blogs and message boards that the last thing I wanted to do was talk about what a certain guitar player ate for lunch.

MRR: So do you feel magazines have escaped from over-commercialization?

JT: Oh to the contrary. There are way too many magazines out there. The other day I noticed that there were four different magazines dedicated to model ship building. Most magazines these days are ad-based though. For every one page of actual written material you have three pages of ads and a ton of the mainstream music magazines have canned interviews with bands. Detroit right now has five weekly magazines about what is going on in Detroit. Trust me not that much is going on here, one magazine could handle it. *Baboon of Sickness* is a monthly and I have absolutely no advertisements. It is completely supported by subscriptions and sales. It allows me to write whatever I want about whoever I want without fear of monetary retaliation.

MRR: But you have gotten into trouble in the past with some of your zines haven't you?

JT: For sure. When *Gorilla of Death* started I was in high school and the county school board held a hearing to see if we should be kicked out of school (we weren't) and to see if they could get the magazine banned from every school in the county (they couldn't). After that fiasco the local papers took us on and called us everything from traitors to mentally retarded. It only gave us more material to work with and it never slowed us down. Now *Baboon* has taken some hits from super conservative groups like Focus on the Family and The American Family Association but again it only makes me work harder. I know I'm doing something because I'm getting a response.

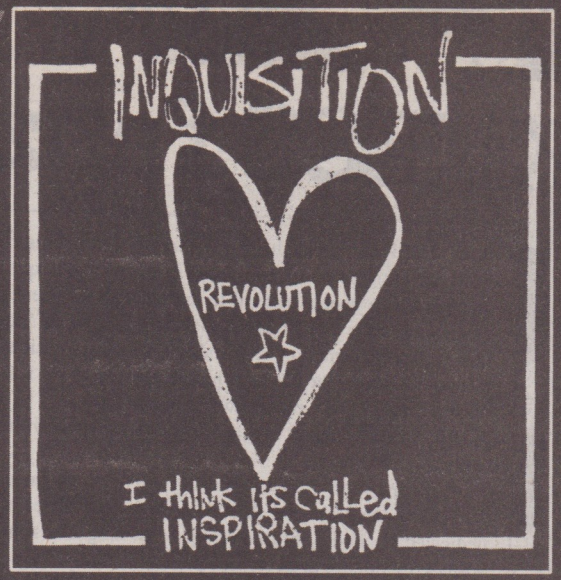
MRR: So what are the future plans for *Baboon of Sickness*, and for you?

JT: When the first issue came out a year ago I was only printing about 100 copies. The next issue will be just over 1,000. I get all kinds of submissions but very few get in or they get heavily edited so the work load is becoming increasingly difficult. Then again *Baboon* has paid my rent recently and I found that very rewarding. I would like to see *Baboon* distributed at shows and independent stores all around the world. I have a cool system set up for people who want to sell it, they make some dough and so do I, and at the same time they can be proud of themselves for being a apart of something that is working to create a more open-minded and well-informed community. Everything in our society seems to have a corporate master these days and that is something I've been fighting and will continue to fight.

MRR: Any last comments, questions or suggestions?

JT: Just this: I'm willing to take the bullets. I'll stand up and get shot in the chest but I have to know that people are behind me and that they'll be ready to stand me up again. It's not about being a martyr; it's not about egotism; it's about giving people something to rally around—something that's real, something that is true, something worth everything.

Baboon of Sickness *is published monthly. Single Issues are $1.00 ppd and a one-year subscription is $12.00. Write to* Baboon of Sickness *PO Box 584 Royal Oak, Michigan 48068-0584*



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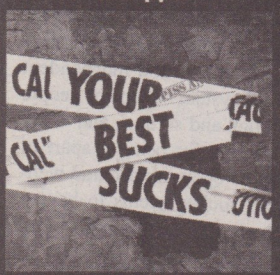

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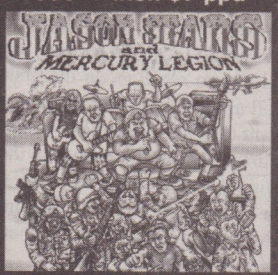

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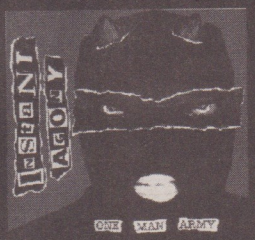

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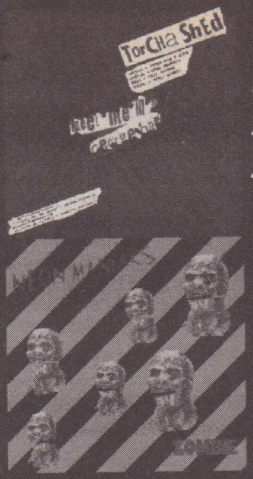

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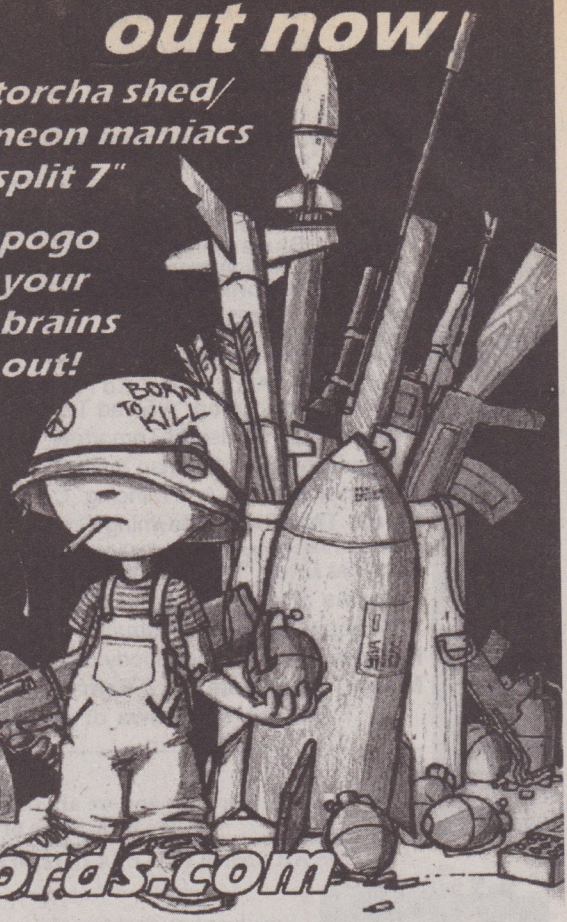

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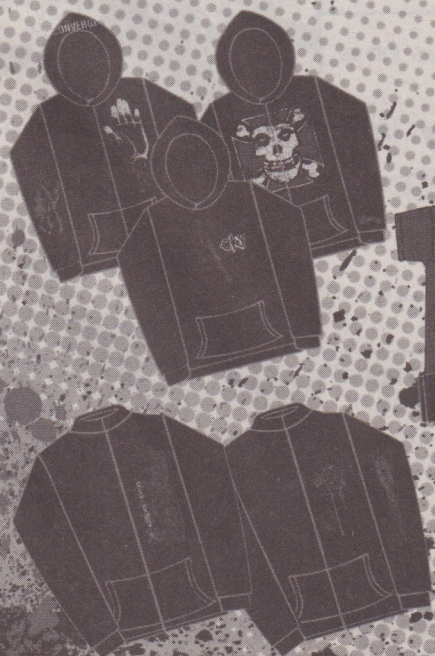

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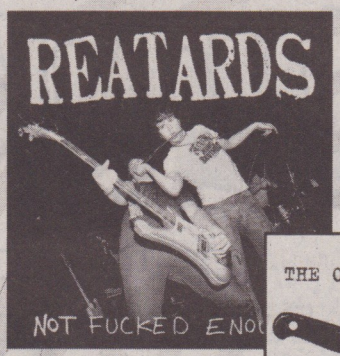

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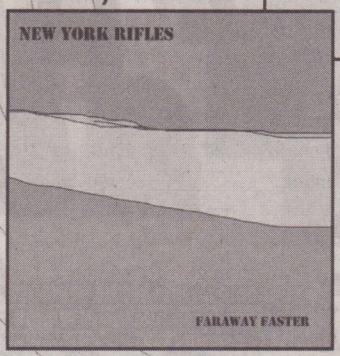

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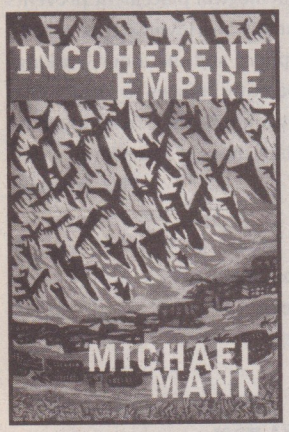

Incoherent Empire
Michael Mann
278 pages • $18
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"When history is made, how will it be written?" asks punk band Giant Haystacks. The author of Incoherent Empire, a sociologist professor named Michael Mann asks and answers similar questions. History being a word as charged as imperialism, colonialism, and militarism. Especially at the end of 2005 as our promises of bringing democracy and freedom to the rest of the world ring hollower and deadlier.

At this point, even the academics are freaking out. The first four chapters deal with this question of empire. Does modern America qualify the way Rome & Britain did in their respective heyday? The arrogance is certainly there. The hollow rhetoric before naked economic pillage. But there's really no need to split hairs between jerky styles though. Mann's written style is understandably exasperated: "The new imperialists say that the American empire will be benevolent, but the Nazis, Japanese militants and Soviets said that too."

This same sort of swagger lets Bush claim that expansionist & supremacist Ariel Sharon is a "man of peace." The author (and reader) bemoan "the stupidity continued." But is it stupidity? They're still winning. Despite protests of the UN, street actions, and global outrage, the US military rolls unabated as the tolls mount. Could be stupidity, could be willful ignorance, or deliberate craftiness.

Incoherent is an apt adjective here. Mann's reasoning and writing are clear enough to follow:

> The new militarists argue that all their enemies could be crushed by American power. They are wrong. American powers are uneven and unsuited for Empire, especially a benevolent one. The American Empire is not yet overstretched, but its stretch is incoherent. This giant's military might sits uneasily with economic and geopolitical resources that originate in multilateral arrangement. It is too stingy to invest properly to consolidate Empire, as we saw in Afghanistan and Iraq. Its militarism also greatly outstrips its political capacity to rule any conquered country and contradicts the ideology of freedom and democracy that the US (and the world) holds dear.

As you know and as these chapters extrapolate, the US uses military unilateralism in lieu of virtually any other recourse. After 9-11, we could've used legal recourse and global sympathy to reckon with those responsible for the twin towers attack. But we didn't even give evidence of al-Qaeda involvement before attacking Afghanistan. Then we decide to roll into Iraq. Umm, can anyone really be surprised that the Muslim world thinks we're total dingdongs?

Chapters 4-8 delve further into our mistakes in Afghanistan and Iraq, with ominous focus on what our militarism could mean in North Korea (or any other "rogue state" harboring terrorists). The evidence presented here is legible and the pattern nigh undeniable, but you might get a headache after a while. A headache as large and looming as the draft. It took me forever to finish this book—not because it was poorly crafted or irrelevant. No, the evidence was just a bit much to read the way I do novels (although the translated fiction of Orhan Pamuk feels acutely timely). The curious human asides in *Incoherent Empire* were especially affecting—how most of the terrorists had backgrounds in the hard sciences. Another punk band asked, *"What makes a man start fires?"* But without such books and arguments, where would we be? Lost further in a country where you don't have to care.

—Travis Fristoe.

Recidivist #3
Zak Sally
104 pages • $15
La Mano
PO Box 580828
Minneapolis, MN 55458
www.lamano21.com

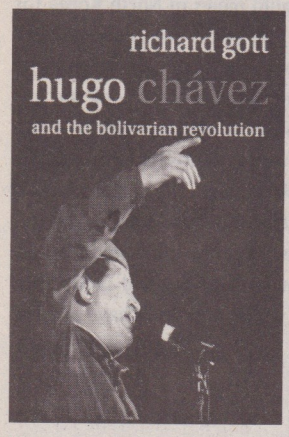
The accompanying press release describes issue #3 of *Recidivist* as a 104-page hardcover with "six separate but interlocking" stories. Do the stories "interlock"? Not that I noticed, but ask me again next year—I'll have read it a few more times by then and may have noticed more than I have so far. Several stories are more like mood pieces or musings. These plotless pieces are still rather powerful. Sally writes of emotional issues from a dark vantage point evocatively and succinctly. In addition to being a fine writer, Sally is an excellent comic artist. His art style and techniques change from piece to piece and were always interesting to my eye. The first story is laid out in consistent six-panel pages, but the rest of the pieces follow no strict page layouts. Instead, the images vary in size, shape, and number per page as Sally uses that to further the storytelling. Sally employs both sharp-lined, simply composed and clear images and black-dominated, scratchy-lined, intricate images in his storytelling, sometimes on the same page. This is a master comic *book* artist at work/play, not a comic *strip* funny guy.

The first story, "Feed The Wife" (who's handcuffed in the dark cellar), seemed merely ugly to me, but after that I started feeling there is more in these pieces than just entertainment for hateful types. I enjoyed three of the other five quite a bit. My favorite piece is more of a regular story than the others. Called "Animal Vomit," it is the tale of three men who's heads have changed into the heads of animals (a dog, a pig, a monkey) and a strange clinic's attempt to cure them in a reality is a bit stranger than ours (or I'm just very sheltered). This 15-page story is sort of H.P. Lovecraft meets

The Fly. The first few pages of the final story (no title, but the first image has the words "Your Black Fucking Heart" written across it) had me thinking he's another pretentious dork and then completely wowed me with a dark message about existence excellently conveyed by his marriage of words and artwork.

I don't know what sort of distribution this book has, but I have a feeling you won't find it too easily in stores. There is, however, publisher contact info a few inches up the page from here. I'd still be happy with this book if I dropped $8 on it. It will run you a few dollars more than that...but you might like it even more than I do!

—Seth Hollander



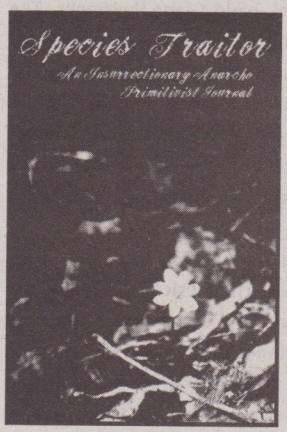
Hugo Chávez and the Bolivarian Revolution
Richard Gott
315 Pages • $18
Verso
180 Varick Street
New York, NY 10014-4606

Just when I thought I'd been worn out on histories of US-backed South American coups (see my review of Jonathan Haslam's book on Allende's Chile a couple months back) and could put all that dirty business behind me, Verso hauls me back down there, this time to Venezuela, with the latest addition to its Fall 2005 slate, Richard Gott's *Hugo Chávez and the Bolivarian Revolution*. The book is an update and expansion of an earlier text released by Verso in 2000 under the name *In the Shadow of the Liberator: Hugo Chávez and the Transformation of Venezuela*, and Gott, a former Latin American correspondent for Britain's the Guardian, seems to relish the opportunity to sink his teeth into a few new chapters.

And what crucial chapters they happen to be. Since the first time around, quite a bit has happened in the life of the Venezuelan president: he's been arrested, overthrown, reinstated, reelected, and generally subjected to the ire of many a US official, who have called him loaded terms such as "extremist" and "populist" as recently as last week (see the news coverage surrounding the recent Latin American economic summit and the subsequent protest). In short, the man needs a defense in the American media, and Gott takes it upon himself to paint as glowing a portrait of Chávez as he possibly can. He writes with an idealism that I would find admirable if it hadn't produced glaring blind spots in his text, and the overall affect is akin to one of those presidential biographies one often sees in grade school libraries: the protagonist is out to change a corrupt system, faces obstacles along the way, and ultimately triumphs for the good of all. All of this makes for a nice fairy-tale, but it can hardly be called in-depth political analysis, and ends up burning out a gaping hole right in the middle of the narrative in place of any actual representation of Chávez's character. Gott renders him in such a way as to make him immune to moral complexity; he is merely a soldier in the war against neoliberalism, meeting opposition with tenacity. Chávez probably comes off more multifaceted in one of his own campaign pamphlets than he does in this book.

Though the text does indeed suffer from a want of depth and true insight, the reductive approach somewhat perversely works in the narrative's favor, providing enough pull through its account of Chávez's various rises and falls to keep me plugging along. Among the book's other strengths is its careful examination of Chávez's self-styling within a lineage of Latin American historical archetypes. In all of his revolutionary rhetoric, the Venezuelan president aligns his struggle and that of the Venezuelan people with the efforts of such paradigmatic figures as Simón Bolivar (after whom Chávez's political project is named) and Simón Rodríguez, effectively painting a historicized portrait of Latin American anti-imperialist conflict and drawing attention to the careful frameworks within which successful politicians operate. Gott's account is, in the end, straightforward (perhaps to a fault) and ultimately quite readable as an introduction to complicated global events happening right now in our world, but its ultimate unwillingness to extrapolate outside of its own particular ideological placement prevents it from resonating except within its own narrow worldview. It is a book purportedly about today's geopolitical atmosphere and the inner-workings of an intriguing political figure that almost patently refuses to engage that atmosphere or investigate that figure with any kind of rigor, resulting in an historical narrative that is more frustrating than thought-provoking.

—Max Tremblay



Species Traitor No. 4
Black and Green
191 pages • $11
Primal War
PO Box 835
Greensburg, PA 15601
www.primalwar.org

I'll admit that when I first picked up *Species Traitor* in at MRR HQ, what its contents were didn't really sink in. The subtitle rang through as far as I saw the word anarchy and decided I wanted to read it. I wasn't really sure what to expect—vague rants about society's collapse with no real resolutions put forward was what I was guessing at (and my guess was right in some ways), but the extremity of the viewpoints and the convictions held took me a little by surprise.

The main themes addressed are the eminent collapse of modern civilization, which isn't too surprising, but also the concepts and implication of revolution and "rewilding." The revolution they preach is not just an outright one, attacking power stations and information passageways, but also an internal one. This is where rewilding comes in. I'd never heard this term before, but its meaning is pretty self-evident. The writers in this journal support a complete return to nature. A life lived off the land and surroundings, totally adaptive and separate from modern civilization. After reading many of the essays an idyllic image of a person wandering the wild, eating roots, stopping every five steps to smell some flowers was inserted into my head. The ideal is nice, and the information and outraged opinion is offered to back it up but the very concept on which these writers base their arguments can seem so dreamy. They always allude to the "fall of civilization" as an inevitable. Some say it'll be soon and some say it'll take a while. They talk about how to attack civilization's power lines and how to tone and train your own body to be ready for the collapse but that's it. There's barely any mention of widespread adaptation and politics, as if when civilization crumbles it'll either be all encompassing, every modern society in existence, or ignored, like American society would crumble and the rest of the world would shrug (which actually makes me wonder now that I write it).

The main contributor to the journal is Kevin Tucker and it's obvious why. His ideas are the most focused and easy to digest. There's a certain practicality that he takes to his arguments, like when he talks about how to train

your body for actual strength and not just mass. It makes the adoption of a nature based way of life seem attainable on a personal level. His essay on veganism as an extension of modern thinking is really interesting in its abstractness of thought and "Prepare for the Best, Train for the Worst" catches your attention in it's broad but easy presentation of how we should return to the wild. But his writings, when addressing why civilization will fall and what will occur after, become vague and take a kind of a snappy tone, like someone who thinks you win an argument by being the loudest. Some of his ideas feel unfinished, in need of further development. This could be a result of the book Tucker's about to have published, like he's giving you a taste of what's to come but not the full palette but if that's the case it's left some of his arguments unfinished.

The rest of the writers in the journal give a mixed output. The two essays by Micro Magnon about the best ways to disrupt power service and destroy fiber optic lines are good in their presentation of revolution as a reality. It's talked of as a technical thing, not just a dreamed possibility. It also might inspire a little civic disruption (although at the back of my mind I can't help but picture idiots doing it for the thrill rather than the purpose and someone getting hurt).

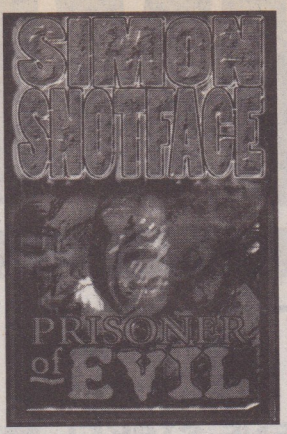
Sky Hiatt's "War on Words" is an interesting thought expressed unfortunately. He talks about literacy and its connection to modern civilization, how it was developed for calculating trade to how it breeds a sedentary way of life. He doesn't, however, address the paradox of arguing against literacy in such a lyrical way (seems to see himself as a poet and isn't troubled about showing that in the essay) or the achievements literacy has brought in regards to the human thought process or even how its one of the most important things in the struggle against modern civilization.

"Culture Void" by Griffin and "Wildness Returns" by Red Wolf both start out well. Throughout both, there is a sense that something exceptional is about to be said in relation to how society will be arranged after the fall but both essays just lean to outraged rhetoric to make their points for them and are both quite short, so nothing really becomes of them.

The major problem I have with this journal is the assumption that humanity can just cast away civilization; that all previous ideas will be pushed off. Our culture is ingrained in our minds and it literally surrounds us. The writers make no effort to explain how we should utilize everything we have created in order to advance society past what it is. They just say society will fall and we must all be physically ready, like screaming preachers on the street with longer placards. But the good thing about this book is its intent. While it would probably be considered quite extremist by most people, I have a lot of respect for this journal's contributors because if they practice the methods they preach then they are fighting a full body revolution against modern society, with conviction that has surpassed modern apathetic attitudes. One of the main ideas repeated throughout the journal (at least in Tucker's writings) is that the best way for any external change to occur is through internal means. If we train our bodies and adapt to the lifestyle described in these pages, eventually so many of us will have changed the way we view civilization that it will have to crumble. When expressed so simply it becomes dreamy, idealized extremism and seems totally impractical. But without grand ideas nothing small would even be achieved.

If the extremism of the views expressed won't get to you, read this book to understand that there are those in the world who see the cracks in society, cracks that nearly all of us can identify, and are acting against it instead of accepting it. Read it to feel inspired to act yourself, but don't read it if you're looking for a doctrine to follow or some kind of bible truth. There are a lot of words being thrown around about the state of civilization and this isn't the last one.

—Craig Cox



Prisoner of Evil
Simon Snotface
195 pages • $18 US / $16 Canada
GoFuckYourself Press
#34-2320 Woodland Drive
Vancouver, BC V5N 3P2
Canada
www.punkbooks.com

This book almost made me vomit. More than once.

Fantasy books often carry with them a wistful netherworld quality. New worlds are forged and good and evil are given a fresh environment in which to explore and engage each other. Fantastical creatures hold enviable powers while characters of heroic disposition get to experience imaginative adventures of great peril and reward. Sounds exciting and fun and full of pleasure and joy, no?

This book almost made me vomit. More than once.

The place is Tilurian, a continent not unlike North America or Europe in its climate and environs. Softskins are akin to (if not actually) humans and we follow one of them (named Akon, about as close to a protagonist as anyone in this story gets) as he fights in a war, escapes capture, gets recaptured, becomes a slave, endures torture, and eventually rejoins with his own cavalry only to meet a surprising fate. Along his route he becomes a captive of the Gubs, possibly the foulest of all fictional characters, whose society is based almost entirely around feces. To explain, the Gubs do not even stop to doodie but instead let it flow whenever the mood strikes. And they most certainly do not clean up after themselves. They live in the stuff, literally, making their homes out of the feces of other Gubs who are given a special additive so that their feces has a stronger consistency that will withstand the elements.

This book almost made me vomit. More than once.

Akon spends most of the book in the hands of Gubs and he lives through some pretty unspeakable torture. By the time he is free again he is found scalped and without ears or genitals or fingers or toes, he is inflicted with thousands of insect bites and worms and a dozen major diseases, and he has gone justifiably insane to boot. Readers aren't just told Akon endured these things, we're told *explicitly* how he lost his appendages, and what its like being raped, and how one can survive being buried in shit while tramping through a city of flies.

This book almost made me vomit. More than once.

That said the book is very well-written. Like any fantasy book the names of locations and races and people are difficult to remember at first but you catch on pretty quickly. The story telling is as smooth and seamless as it is graphic and gross. The author isn't afraid to put his characters into interesting predicaments and come up with thoughtful ways to move the story along. If I were Hollywood-minded I would have been concerned that this book has no "good guys" but as it were I am not, and I enjoyed it's absolute badness.

—Craigums

MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

I LIKE MY OLIVES GREEN, BUT I DON'T WANT TO PICK THEM MYSELF

It is a sad state of affairs when the best films I saw this month were made in the 30s. Why aren't people making films like **This Day and Age** anymore? **This Day and Age** is a 1933 Cecil B. DeMille film that barely anyone remembers. When I read this super short description of it in the San Francisco's Balboa Theater's calendar, I knew I had to see it. Simply stated, "Teenagers kidnap the gang boss and hang him over a pit of rats." What more did I need to know?

You might like to know that **This Day and Age** is a great film that punks will love. If it were available on DVD, I could see it becoming a big cult film. High school vigilantes become quickly cynical about the legal system when one witnesses the local tailor's murder. The tailor would not pay "protection" to the town's crime syndicate so the man in charge of the territory, Louis Garrett, kills him. Local good boy, Steve Smith, walks into the shop and sees what has happened. Unfortunately, he is the only witness and Garrett had arranged his alibi by making an on-stage appearance at his nightclub before and after the murder. The prosecutor goes to work making Smith look like an unreliable witness and Garrett is released due to lack of evidence.

The high school boys try to understand why the killer has been released. The adults do not provide good enough answers, so they take matters into their own hands. The spectacle of all of the town's high school boys getting together to get the truth out of Garrett is pure DeMille excess. The kids march him through the streets of town to get his signed confession witnessed by the Judge who set him free in the first place. Some of the adults, like the Mayor, are relieved the boys have done what others couldn't do. The others make plans to leave town for fear of their associations becoming public.

The righteousness of the high school students is nice and the politeness of the gangsters is pleasant too. What modern movie would allow Garrett's bodyguard Toledo, when he realizes a girl he is interested in is a virgin, to simply tell her to go home? "I like my olives green, but I don't want to pick them myself," he tells her as he gives her the key to get out of the hotel room. Classy..

I read on IMDB that there is a print of **This Day and Age** at the Library of Congress and they'll screen it for you if you make an appointment with them at least two weeks in advance. I don't know how feasible that is for anyone, but it will be worth it if you do. (www.loc.gov)

This Day and Age played with **Two Kinds of Women**, a1932 film by DeMille's older, lesser-known brother William C. de Mille. **Two Kinds of Women** follows Emma Krull, the daughter of a South Dakota senator, as she joins her father on a trip to Manhattan. Senator Krull is making the trip in order to debate with the New York senator on the topic of whether New York City is representative of America. Naturally, the big city people find the small town folk quaint and the small town folk find the big city people lewd and without morals. Sounds like this film could be set in 2005.

On her first night out in Manhattan, Emma and her friend go to a speakeasy before heading off to dinner. There they run into notorious bachelor Joseph Gresham, Jr. Emma's friend knows him as well as his reputation so she taunts him about it. Gresham is immediately attracted to Emma and offers to show her around New York. Emma resists at first, but at the insistence of her friend she agrees to go with Joseph.

Naturally, Emma and Joseph fall in love, though there is a problem. He is already married to dancer Phyllis Adrian, who won't divorce him unless he pays her off. Things get worse when Phyllis is accidentally killed.

Unlike today's movies, **Two Kinds of Women** shows a different side of American attitude. It is a time when loyalty and family were more important than careers. The end of the film is very different from anything you'd see these days. The "lessons" you learn in this film are so different than ones we learn in 2005. The elder de Mille is a less extravagant filmmaker than his brother is. There is a great scene at the speakeasy when Emma first arrives in New York. The camera runs along the bar filming just the hands and drinks of the patrons while they talk to their friends. It is a very subtle scene that conveys so much about people.

For the simple joy of watching films, I recommend tracking down a copy of Serge Gainbourg's debut film **Je t'aime moi non plus**. Although Gainsbourg is mostly known as a musician, he did write and direct a couple of films. **Je t'aime moi non plus** was the first he made, in 1976. The title is usually translated to **I Love You, I Don't**, but the print I saw was titled **I Love You, Nor Do I**. It doesn't really make a difference, but it is fun to note.

Je t'aime moi non plus is the story of two gay garbagemen, Krassky and Padovan. Unlike most gay men seen in 70s films, they are not effeminate. They can't be since they are hauling trash. They act like average macho men. Early in the film we see a bunch of guys whose car has broken down. Krassky is driving the dump truck and pulls over to give them a ride. One of the guys sits in the front seat with Krassky and Padovan and the others hop in the back of the truck. When the passenger in the front seat realizes the two are gay, he makes a derogatory comment about them. Padovan opens the door and kicks the man out of the moving truck. Krassky then dumps the rest of them out the back.

Krassky and Padovan stop at a deserted restaurant for lunch and meet a tomboy named Johnny. Krassky becomes attracted to her and starts to go the restaurant everyday. They begin to get romantic, but when Krassky sees Johnny naked he can't go through with it. The only way he can do it with her is anally, but she can't. She ends up screeching so loud they get kicked out of a couple of hotels. Yet, when it comes down to it, who will Krassky chose, his boyfriend or his new girlfriend? The last scene is pretty ridiculous.

Je t'aime moi non plus has lots of gratuitous nudity and not too much of a plot. It is just a silly way to pass the time. Plus, you get to hear the title song over and over again. It's a good song so I didn't mind too much.

Thumbsucker should take some lessons from these movies. I think the premise of the movie is interesting. A bored high school student finds focus and ambition with the help of a Ritalin-type drug. His parents are against putting him on drugs, but when he seems to be open to it they allow him to try it. Instead of being a daydreamer, he becomes the champion of the debating team. He is so good at convincing people of things that the girls on his debate team get him to ask their teacher/coach to buy them some beer. After a bit of an argument, the teacher agrees and buys them a six pack.

Thumbsucker's problem is that it tries too hard to explain the troubles of high school kids. Yes, there is so much pressure to succeed; we get it. Having too many wacky adults around doesn't help much either.

The strangest thing happened near the end of **Thumbsucker**. The couple sitting next to me got up to leave when there was about ten minutes left of the film. Their exodus quickly caught on as everyone left the theater within seconds. I assume everyone knew what was going to happen, but it seemed strange that no one wanted to stay and see it through. Except me, that is. (www.sonyclassics.com/thumbsucker)

Never Been Thawed seems like it would be a really funny movie if my friends were starring in it. I could see myself being entertained by various people I know acting out these roles, particularly if I had already been familiar with their performances of the characters. Unfortunately, I don't know any of these

actors and their motivations aren't always clear.

Never Been Thawed attempts to poke fun at American consumer culture. Some of the scenarios might make you crack a smile. Frozen Entry collectors. Sure, it is possible. A man opens the No-Choice café across from the abortion clinic. Cute. A rock band can't make it so they change their lyrics from being about girls to being about God and hit the Christian rock circuit to wild success. It seems to work the other way around, so why not? **Never Been Thawed** just assumes people will find this sort of stuff funny, so it doesn't try to go too much beyond that. They needed to follow through. I could have used some actual satire with this concept. (www.neverbeenthawed.com)

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI

THE DIVINE WIND OF FATE

It's not uncommon knowledge that the word "kamikaze" means "divine wind"—a term heavy with allusions to Japan's fated WWII suicide pilots. The term might take on a new cast after you see Tetsuya Nakashima's skewed pop culture satire, **Kamikaze Girls**—a giddy battle royale of polar opposites.

Momoko (pop idol Kyoko Fukada) pushes the Japanese adoration of cuteness well past Hello Kitty extremes. She's one of those Japanese girls who subscribe to the "Lolita" look. (If you haven't been reading your newspapers, this usually involves wearing dresses adorned by an embarrassment of lace and embroidery to give a distinctive "little girl" look. The trend is as peculiar as it is peculiarly Japanese.) Her dad's a soft-gutted yakuza with a failed racket selling ersatz Versace gear, cross-branding it to double the potential legal troubles. Her eccentric mother has run away with her gynecologist (proving that childbirth can be a good way to meet guys), leaving Momoko with her eccentric grandma, whose main expertise is snatching insects out of the country air.

The movie begins at the end, sort of, with Momoko crashing her moped into a produce truck, glass, fruit, and pachinko balls flying everywhere. In her slow-mo trip through the air, he has a chance to reflect on her life, now to be cut short in its prime. She's comfortable that, in death, she's still going to at least look great. And so the movie ends, or rather begins.

Aside from her fate, a major part of Momoko's problem lies in her association with a rude biker five feet in the air. She spits and sticks straws up her nose, and head-butts Momoko unconscious whenever she gets to be a pain.

In short, Momoko's a long way from Tokyo, where she goes to sample the latest Lolita chic. On the hunt for cash, Momoko cashes in on pachinko, winning buckets of the shiny silver balls. Ichigo is hopeless at the game, but gets ace tutoring from an ultra-cool rockabilly guy with dyed bouffant hair sticks out six inches, making "whoosh" noise whenever he turns his head.

It's easy to view **Kamikaze Girls** as an exercise in extreme fashion, but in faddish Japan, the film's argument carries additional weight. Even the filmmaking is weighty in style. Wild editing, smog-yellow cinematography, and a soundtrack of perky pop music make the movie seem like an extension of Momoko and Ichigo's extreme personal images. The director himself plays the style game, and he takes you from Ibariki to Tokyo, from the Baroque and Rococo to today, absorbing everything and spitting it out as Japanese pop culture.

There's almost nothing normal about **Kamikaze Girls**, and the camera seems intent on magnifying extremes. Like **Kill Bill**, the narrative is peppered with anime snippets of bloody fight scenes, and like anime, it tugs at reality until it has the consistency of taffy. For the record, it wins your affection as it earns your respect.

While **Kamikaze Girls** defies genre, **Three...Extremes** has been getting attention for its being a new twist on an old genre. Pulling together some of the best directorial talent in Asia, each forty-minute horror film offers the distinct style and vision of its maker.

Director Fruit Chan doesn't have a track record for horror, but his "Dumplings" is certainly creepy. An aging actress (Miriam Yeung, who's more experienced in comedy) plays an aging actress whose husband (former idol Tony Leung Kar Fai) no longer shows much interest in her. In an effort to shed her matronly figure and sallow complexion, she does what's customary in Hong Kong—she eats.

She makes her way to a dilapidated apartment complex to visit a young woman whose dumplings are said to be "the best." At this point, most jaded HK film fans will be reaching to suppress a feigned yawn; having seen HK films like **Human Meat Pies**, the gimmick of eating taboo food becomes passé. But "Dumplings" does go one step beyond; in her spare time, the cook purchases aborted fetuses from hospital workers .The resulting dumplings are chewy, and aren't particularly tasty, but seem to have a certain power for rejuvenation. As the cook waxes over the health properties of fetuses in various stages of development, it's clear she's been doing this for a while. As she sings songs from the turn of the century, she claims that she's "her own best advertisement."

With the help of Christopher Doyle's gritty cinematography, Chan's film comes off almost like a meditation on age and youth. More gruesome than the visuals are the sound effects, which never miss a chance to capture the noise of molars grinding down minced fetuses. Sadly, Fruit Chan misses all the best chances for black humor, which is sorely needed here. His art-house background fails him in what could have been a truly perverse little film.

With films like **Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance** and **Oldboy**, both given US releases, South Korean director Park Chan-Wook has made a reputation for himself in a different kind of terror. He makes wrenching, high-concept (albeit improbable) horror pieces that invariably draw you in (despite your best efforts to resist.

Ryu Ji-Ho lives an almost fairy tale existence: he's an artistically and economically successful film director, well-liked, handsome, young, and compassionate toward his workers. He has a beautiful wife and a spacious mansion.

And then the nastiness begins.

He awakens on his set (made out to look very much like something from a Dario Argento film). He's bound by cords, and his wife's limbs and fingers have been glued to strings on a grand piano, making her into a kind of living puppet.

As it happens, Lim Won-Hee, an extra in all of the director's films, is behind this mischief. The pudgy numbskull isn't angry at the director for any of any slights or faults; he's bothered because his life is so damn virtuous. The idea of this fine, privileged man living his perfect life has pushed him over the edge. And now Lim's the one pulling the strings.

Vengeance, deserved or not, is the core theme in Park Chan-Wook's films, and here, it's like an invisible force that can possess the human soul. But just how far can Ryu be pushed before he himself becomes a blind instrument of violence?

With its forays into dismemberment and child murder, "Cut" is the most troubling of the films in **Three...Extremes**. By staging the short on a film set, he suggests that our everyday roles are just that, and that we can take on other, more sinister characters under the right conditions. This is easily the most thought-provoking and chilling short film of the group.

You can bet that the prolific Miike Takashi wouldn't refuse a chance to make a horror film, and "Box" is a strange and perverse exercise that allows him to make a more stylized film—almost a dreamlike personality study. Takashi has directed some of the most elegantly violent films in recent history, so it's surprising how little blood is spilled in this short.

Authoress Kyoko Hasegawa is troubled by a repeating dream that she can't seem to resolve. She's given to somberness and long silences, and sometimes receives visitations from the spirit of her long-dead sister, who hides in crawlspaces and behind doors. Most her dreams involve being deep in the woods, trapped in a box, with cold earth piled on layer by layer.

Takashi films have always had their surreal moments, but recently, even his yakuza and samurai flicks have had turns worthy of David Lynch. "Box" has a dreamlike feel throughout, and any number of times, the narrative will restart when Kyoko awakens from a new dream. The atmosphere is so intense that you fall for the device every time. Miike Takashi's visual sense is superior to the other directors here, and he has a greater mastery of the genre film. As a result, "Box" comes off as more accomplished than its simple subject matter might indicate.

This is the second installment in the **Extremes** series. Given the commercial and critical success of this installment, I wouldn't be surprised if a third were in the works as you read.

Reactions? Email me at *anywhichway@myway.com*.

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Reviewers: (TB) Tim Brooks, (MC) Mitch Cardwell, (RC) Rob Coons, (CC) Carl Cordova, (PC) Paul Curran, (AD) Andy Darling, (DD) Dr. Dante, (SD) Sean Dougan, (NE) Nic Eagle, (JF) Jonathan Floyd, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (JH) Jeff Heermann, (VH) Vince Horner, (LG) Layla Gibbon, (CS) Chris Hubbard, (KK) Kenny Kaos, (CK) Carolyn Keddy, (RK) Ramsey Kanaan, (WK) Will Kinser, (EL) Elliott Lange, (RL) Ray Lujan, (HM) Hal MacLean, (AM) Allan McNaughton, (GN) Golnar Nikpour, (BR) Bruce Roehrs, (KS) Ken Sanderson, (MS) Martin Sorrondeguy, (SS) Steve Spinali, (BS) Brian Stern, (RW) Ryan Wells, (SW) Shane White.

365 DAGAR AV SYND – "Reu Nu Pert Em Hru" EP

Dark and heavy Scandi-crust from these ex-DÖMSDÖMD folks, on a label from the Czech Republic. Not surprisingly, this EP sounds a lot like the DÖMSDÖMD LP from a couple of years back. The recording on this is almost overwhelmed by low-end, which muffles some of the guitar parts but gives the record an overall feel of heaviness that works pretty well with the mood of the songs. Though they pretty much stick to a hardcore pace, they do slow things up pretty drastically on a couple of tunes, which leads me to kind of lose attention. This band is by far at their best when they keep things fast and driving. Two vocalists on this one, one of which is throaty in a MARTYRDÖD sort of way, and the other whose vocals are pretty straightforward for this kind of crusty hardcore. Not a bad debut, and limited to 500. (GN)
(Phobia, c/o Mirek Vokal, PO Box 5, Libice N/C 289 07, CZECH REPUBLIC)

ACCION MUTANTE – "The Complete Discography" CD

Whoa, this is some seriously intense grind/crustcore. I remember when their first EP came out back in 1995 and how much I was into it. I haven't listened to them in a while, but it didn't take long for me to get right back into it. This is some blazing shit that falls somewhere in between EXTREME NOISE TERROR and DOOM. Political lyrics, crushing vocals and of course there is a DISCHARGE cover! Seek out their vinyl or just make it easy and pick up this CD. (RC)
(Crimes Against Humanity, PO Box 1421, Eau Claire, WI 54702, www.cahrecords.com)

HASIL ADKINS – "Moon Over Madison" CD

An even 20 Hasil Adkins love songs (none of 'em featuring drunken cannibals, headhunters, Big Red Satellites or backwoods dance steps like the Chicken Walk, the Hunch, or the Slop). Mostly culled from 1956 – '63 woodshed sessions, *Moon Over Madison* is a collection that shows off the sensitive side of the world's most idiosyncratic one-man band to ever gain access to a tape recorder: even when he's trying to sound sweet he makes your hackles rise in unreasoning terror. Tunes like "Blue Velvet Band," "By the Lonesome River," and "I Had a Dream About You" kinda trundle along optimistically, hitting the right notes more often than not and spinning little tales of hillbilly heartache and loss. Part country, part rock and roll, part shambolic one-man band, part achin' ol' heart disease. It's touching stuff that shows a direct connection to all those ancient and arcane tunes the locals used to croon down in the Holler when the stars were right. *Moon Over Madison* doesn't reach the intensity of Adkins' "I Want Your Head (This Ain't No Rock 'n' Roll Show)" or "She Said" (covered so effectively by the CRAMPS), but it's still a compelling, urgent listen. You *will* be moved. (JH)
(Norton, PO Box 646, Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276, www.nortonrecords.com)

THE ADULESCENTS UK – "Banging a Shovel Against a Shed" CD

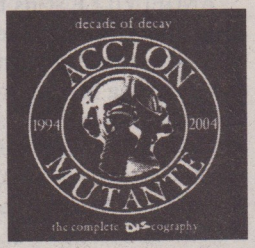
Tongue-in-cheek punk rock done with a cheeky wink and nod that only a bunch of cidered-up punks from ye ol' country could pull of. Sing-along appeal hits 11, never easing off—the tunes will be swimming round your noggin for months—don't fight it, 'cause you'll lose. Fond memories of SNUFF come flooding in, along with the smartass charm of EASTFIELD, and the hooks and crooks of the 'TONE. I can't think of one reason way I shouldn't love this CD, so fuck it, I won't. (SD)
(Yakakaa, 137 Doncaster Rd., Tickhill, Doncaster, DN11 9JD, ENGLAND, www.theadulescentsuk.com)

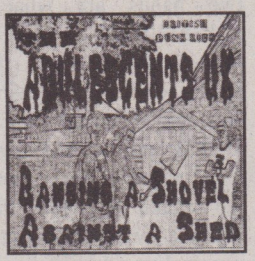
ALTAIRA / WATCH IT BURN – split EP

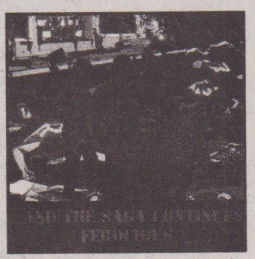
Phew, judging by the cover I thought this was going to be crusty hardcore. No-sirree. What we have here is more good grassroots melodic punk from Portland. WATCH IT BURN brings to mind the REPLACEMENTS, or a rougher, louder NILS, with a healthy dose of contemporary Gainesville. ALTAIRA has an even bigger No Idea thing going on, like HOT WATER MUSIC and (since I'm feeling generous) PANTHRO UK UNITED 13. Good DIY punk from the Rose City (like the DRUNKEN BOAT record I reviewed last month) and San Diego. This is recommended. (AD)
(Accident Prone, PO Box 15087, Portland, OR 97293)

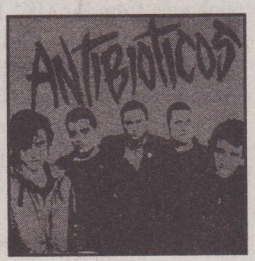
...AND THE SAGA CONTINUES – "Ferocious" EP

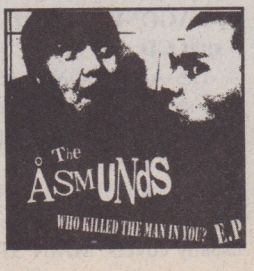
This band has many an axe to grind. These hectic political rants come courtesy of pissed-off punks from











Montreal, Quebec, Canada (or so the label would indicate). The hardcore thrash is laced with angry lyrics about government, religion, corporations, the pharmaceutical industry, and the loneliness of death. The punk rock on this EP is an amalgam of stop-start, venomous, bitter music with the occasional melody thrown in to lull you into complacency. ...AND THE SAGA CONTINUES is a noisy, clattering cauldron of pain and unhappiness. What makes the listener really uncomfortable is that the gloom they describe is way too close to the truth. For a miserable evening dealing with reality, this is recommended. (BR)
(Fuck the Bullshit, 2084 Decarie, Apt 1, Montreal, Quebec, H4A 3J3, CANADA)

ANGELVILLE – "We Are the Wolves" CD

ANGELVILLE starts this CD off with some desert rock-sounding intro, sounds like they got some lap steel going on and some banjo riffing. I was expecting to hear some SCISSORFIGHT-style tunes, but they don't deliver. Oh well. What it turns out sounding like is the all the popular metal hardcore-meets-stoner-rock sound that kids seem to be catching onto with bands like DOOMRIDERS and COLISEUM. I guess those two bands are what I would compare ANGELVILLE to, but don't get me wrong here—I wouldn't say riff for riff they sound alike; they have the driving anthemic parts; they have stoney jam parts and howling vocals similar to ISIS; and occasionally they do some down-tuned nu-metal breakdowns. All that along with the simple and sleek black and gold layout adorned with menacing eyeballs, skeletons, werewolves riding motorcycles, and iron crosses. This CD is worth buying if you are into the music that Deathwish and Hydrahead Records put out—just don't expect your head to explode when the needle first hits the record. (NE)
(Happy Couples Never Last, PO Box 36997, Indianapolis, IN 46236, www.hcnl.com)

ANNALISE – "Here's to Hope" CD

Wow, a domestic release from these melodic punk vets from the UK! I hope a US tour is on the horizon. More solid stuff in the vein of TRAVIS CUT, SKIMMER, and the STRIKE. There's even a song "New Sound" about the importance of punk in one's life, with the line "got our education from Maximum Rock 'n' Roll." Right on! It sure beats another band thanking the CLASH. (RL)
(No Idea, www.annalise.co.uk)

ANTAGONIZERS / MAIN STREET SAINTS – split CD

The ANTAGONIZERS play red-white-and-blue street punk that considers itself big, tough, and scary. It ain't bad I suppose but I've heard it a million times, and I've heard it done way better. An ANGEIC UPSTARTS cover, which makes a change from the macho shit this genre usually covers. MAIN STREET SAINTS take a more Oi approach; amateurish but still trying to sound like a serious hard hitter. It's all too forced and proud to be American, whatever that means. By the way, this CD is dedicated to the "families of and those who lost their lives due to terrorism or attempting to fight against it." Well, this review is dedicated to the families of and those who lost lives due to the greedy imperialism waged in the name of America. Stick that in your pipe and smoke it, Popeye. (SD)
(Street Anthem, PMB #218, 1530 Locust St, Philadelphia, PA 19102)

ANTIBIOTICOS – "Idea Envenenada" EP

From Spain, this is fairly straightforward hardcore, which is well played and a good representation of the sound, if not terribly original. If you like European hardcore, you should definitely like this. Limited to 525 copies. (KK)
(Discos Subterraneos, Apdo 185, 26580 Arnedo, SPAIN)

THE ASMUNDS – "Who Killed the Man in You" EP

A Danish punk band that sounds like something from a missing *Killed by Death* comp? Surely not! It's kind of a cliché at this point, yes, but I like this. Just drums guitar and vox, it's simple and raw and, yes, punk in that trashed out style. The mix tape song is "Can't Be Happy." All the songs are about being a drunk punk: "Let's get drunk and play some punk." Truth be told, I probably would not buy this or listen to it ever again. It's a little too straight-ahead for me. (LG)
(Hit Me, www.hitmerecords.com)

ASS-END OFFEND – "Unchecked Aggression" EP

Recorded by the illustrious Mike Lastra of Portland, this sounds way better than any of this band's previous material. The guitars are chunky, the drums and bass pound hard as fuck and the singers scream, yell, and get all up in your face. The music is based on ass-kickingly brutal thrash, but the spare use of creative mosh/metal breakdowns and slower, dare I say TRAGEDY-esque, bits add that extra something that makes this record totally awesome. I feel like this would appeal to fans of the current slew of great Bay Area hardcore bands like DEADFALL and BORN/DEAD as well as more, uh, mature listeners. (PC)
(Wantage, PO Box 8681, Missoula, MT 59807, www.wantageusa.com)

BALLAST – "The Stand-Off" EP

Noisy crust punk from Quebec. Male/female vocals bring to mind NAUSEA and PINK TURDS IN SPACE, along with a hundred others. The vocals are done in English, though there is a French translation in the lyric sheet. (AD)
(Stonehenge, B.P. 46, 3031 Bordeaux Cedex, FRANCE)

BAMBIX – "Club Matuchek" CD

This must be their fifth or sixth full-length, and I'm still as excited/enamored with this, as with their first. This Dutch trio takes the drive and melody of LEATHERFACE at their finest, and tops it off with some wonderful and tightly-harmonized female vocals. Sheer bliss. Believe me. One of the few bands out there who've still yet to put out a bad record. Quite the opposite. This is real good. (RK)
(Go-Kart Europe, www.gokartrecords.de)

BARRACUDAS – CD

Good thing the BARRACUDAS kept the same logo since their 1980s heyday, or I might not have made the connection (and figured that the moniker was being reduced, reused and recycled by some gang of know-nothings). Throughout the 80s, the BARRACUDAS released a series of folky, psych-ey, catchy albums of tousled-locks rock in a FLAMIN' GROOVIES vein. Fun listening, y'know—not exactly in step with Two Monstrous Nuclear Stockpiles and the nascent Nardcore roller-derby scene—but fun listening. Flash forward a couple of decades, and guess who trot out a 15-track self-titled CD: *right.* The 2005 BARRACUDAS still write well-worked, pleasant tunes that waver between jangly power-pop and slick, commersh rock, but the cumulative effect isn't exactly a lightning bolt to the gonads—more like how the DAMNED sounded on *Anything* or *Phantasmagoria.* Professional to a fault, clean instead of coarse, and too polished for this listener (and most of you readers). (JH)
(NDN, www.ndnrecords.com)

BASTA BASTA – "Tama Vari" CD

Hardcore from Finland, but not at all in the classic Finnish hardcore style. Instead, BASTA BASTA takes a fairly modern approach to their hardcore punk on this, their debut full-length. The vocals are screamed and raspy, but are kind of low in the mix. There are a bunch of dark, metallic guitar leads but not in a particularly crusty way. Maybe more metalcore? There are some faster, more straightforward songs and those are, for me, the highlights of this disc; too bad even those give way into weird guitar noodling much of the time. Anyway, the recording quality kind of works against this 'cause everything sounds pretty muffled, but overall this is competently played if ultimately forgettable neo-hardcore. (GN)
(Stay Free Underground, PL 264, 33101 Tampere, FINLAND, www.stu-records.com)

THE BEAUTIFUL MOTHERS – "Half-American Serviceman" CD

Fuck this is big, and I mean *big*; the rock in full effect, the riffs enormous, and it's got that trademark Jack Endino production that even when down low sounds loud and beautifully clear. It's almost a three-way marriage between stoner rock, punk rock, and grooved-out 70s

rock. This'll have ya out of your fuckin' chair and giving the two-finger salute till your damn nose bleeds. KARP comes to mind, as does early FU MANCHU, REFUSED, and a host of other totally unrelated bands. Did I mention MONORCHID? Ah, to hell with the comparisons, just get this. Rumbling, heavy, menacing, charged with punk energy and choruses big enough to floor King Kong. Seattle has risen. (SD)
(www.beautifulmothers.com)

BELLRAYS – "@ the Barfly" DVD

A roughly-shot performance from April 2005 in London. Shot mostly from the side stage, close up, you can practically feel the sweat and body odor of being pressed against the stage. A cool, gritty performance from this now well-known soul-punk outfit. Includes a band interview as well. I think the bad-ass singer puts it best in a musical intro: "Ain't nobody from Detroit in this motherfucker, I came to give you love!" Revolution get down indeed! (RL)
(Punkervision)

BENT OUTTA SHAPE – "Stray Dog Town" LP

Hell fucking yeah! From the get-go this record sounds like a heartfelt, gritty, tuneful punk classic in the vein of STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, REPLACEMENTS, and oddly enough, GRABASS CHARLESTONS. This record finds BENT OUTTA SHAPE more musically advanced, catchier, and probably drunker than ever. Perhaps it's the addition of our East Bay homeboy Naters on second guitar and his prodigious layers of noodly guitar lines, or maybe it's the vaguely country (lonely, drinkin', travelin', tryin' to forget) feeling—the key ingredient in the better REPLACEMENTS and (sorry, but) ROLLING STONES songs—that make this LP rule. It's so good, it's like the Can-Cun burrito of punk vinyl. (PC)
(Recess, PO Box 1666, San Pedro, CA 90733-1666, www.recessrecords.com)

BEYOND PINK – "Jedan Dva, Jebla Te Ja" LP

An all-female hardcore punk band from Sweden who plays nice and thrashy hardcore with loads of energy. Music aside, these women sound so fucking pissed off! It comes through on all levels musically and lyrically. The lyrics are heavy on their stance as punk women in a male-dominated scene and world. Included is a nicely-printed booklet with lyrics, photos, and other bits of art. "Slave for My Uterus" is a great song ending with the words "Kill the baby!" Wow! (MS)
(Emancy Punx, emancypunxrecords@go2.pl)

BIONICMAN – "This Machine" CD

Eleven supercharged emo offerings. The high-end guitar and melody lines are very reminiscent of ALL at their experimental best. The driving rhythms and hoarse vocals harken back to early HOT WATER MUSIC. A pretty potent mix, I'll concede. But these chaps live up to their name on this one. (RK)
(Rosewater, www.rosewaterrecords.com)

BITCHES AND BASTARDS – "Bitchslaps!" CD

God-awful Norwegian street punk. Mid-tempo and totally unoriginal, but what do you expect? Songs against sex offenders and socialism—say no more. (AD)
(Punk Shit)

BITE THE BULLET / THE HILLSIDE STRANGLERS – split EP

BITE THE BULLET, from Berlin, delivers some fast, punchy street punk with cool call-and-response vocals. Their English has a hint of an English accent giving them an oi feel. The HILLSIDE STRANGLERS kick down "Detroit Noise," a fast ditty full of fancy guitar wailing. They follow it up with "Something New" which sounds like a new song that seems too long and not quite finished. They include a DVD of "Something New;" unfortunately, my copy doesn't work. (HM)
($4 ppd: Detroit Noise, 1217 Griswold, Detroit, MI 48226)

BLACK LIPS – "Let It Bloom" LP

How quickly they grow up! Third LP dilemma: how to (as Frankie Fix put it) "progress without bein' progressive," a challenge that the boys successfully rise to with slower tempos and more overtly psych and pop influences while still maintaining the fucked-up sideways scampishness that makes them, well, them. (DD)
(In the Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050)

BLOODSHOT BILL – "Lonely Nights" EP

This could easily pass for jen-you-wine 1950s (recorded around 3:00 AM, to be more precise) demos of some (very) depressed country cat under the influence of CHARLIE FEATHERS, a pretty neat feat as I've heard many less successful attempts at tapping a similar vein. Good stuff. (DD)
(Squoodge, www.bloodshotbill.com)

BOMBSHELLS – "Audio Wasteland" CD

So, in Sweden there is a band called BOMBSHELL ROCKS, who would be all right if they weren't so much like RANCID. BOMBSHELL might be alright if they didn't remind me so much of BOMBSHELL ROCKS. To clarify things, BOMBSHELL plays a pseudo streetpunk-meets-Cali-melodicore thing that kids who wear baggy shorts but still have the spiked jackets are probably going to love. Not horrible, just not too memorable. (JF)
(www.thebombshellswebsite.com)

BRILLIANT RED LIGHTS – "Touch Like You Want It" CD

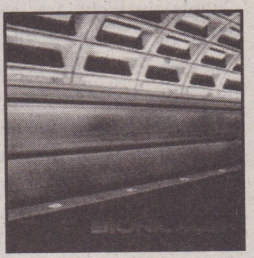
A quirky melodic band that reminds me of NEW SWEET BREATH with the spastic rhythms of the MINUTEMEN. If you like your riffing twisted yet with music and vocals that are pretty listenable, these local boys may be for you. A nice change of pace. (RL)
(Agent, 130 Market Place PMB 163, San Ramon, CA 94583, www.agentrecords.com)

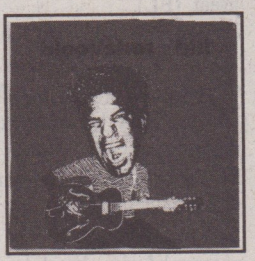
BULLETS TO BROADWAY – "Drink Positive" CD

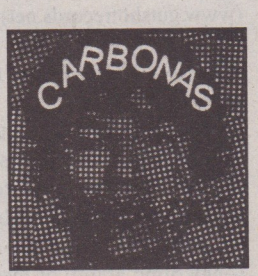
Don't be put off by the appalling title. Inside, you'll find three quarters of the TEEN IDOLS laying down eight tracks of shiny yet driving pop punk, with some exquisite male/female vocal interplay/harmony. Imagine how good SCREECHING WEASEL's *Anthem for a New Tomorrow* would've sounded with some female harmony vocals. Or how good BAMBIX sound today. (RK)
(www.redscare.net)

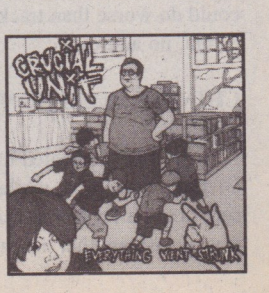
CARBONAS – "Waiting to Happen" EP

Three hard-rocking *Killed by Death*-style punkers by this now long-running group. The songs bleed together









slightly with samey production, but it could be the daylight filtering through the window that makes me so harsh; this is stuff to be played in a basement apartment the afternoon after a brutal party. "Nostalgia Buff" is the standout on this—a supercharged channeling of the NEW YORK DOLLS played at 78 speed that actually has a hint of that most elusive quality on a modern garage-punk record: a decent set of pipes. Okay, I closed the shades, this is a great record, okay, okay...(RW)
(Shattered, www.shatteredrecords.net)

CAR VS. DRIVER – "The Completist" CD

Retrospective of this emo band from, I don't know, somewhere near DC. I didn't particularly like this stuff at the time, and I must say, it really hasn't passed the test of time. (AD)
(Stickfigure, PO Box 55462, Atlanta, GA 30308)

CATHETER / ROT – split EP

On the plus side, CATHETER—as always—completely kicks ass, and this EP has a great cover of a police station (the actual building) grabbing and eating people. On the not so positive side, I'm fairly certain all three of these CATHETER tracks are included on their new full length *Dimension 303*. And as for ROT—well, I can't say I've ever been much of a ROT fan; noisy simple and dull is what comes to mind when I listen to their stuff. I'd say skip this (or put it on your wall for the artwork) and just pick up the CATHETER full-length, which is fucking great. (EL)
(Haunted Hotel, www.hauntedhotelrecords.com)

CAUGHT UP – "Crossfaced" EP

CAUGHT UP plays fast modern hardcore in the musical vein of bands like LIGHTS OUT and FLOORPUNCH. The songwriting is good, but the vocals are a little too strained for my tastes. Like most bands in this genre, you can expect personal lyrics, breakdowns galore, and…chain wallets? (CC)
(www.gutshotrecords.net)

JOHNNY CHEAPO – "Rock 'n' Roll Sinner" CD

This is dated 2002. I guess sometimes it takes a while to get these things out there. Mr. Cheapo and his band lay down ten tracks of up-tempo punk about girls and trouble, much in the vein of SLOPPY SECONDS. He doesn't quite have the songwriting ability of that band, but it's catchy, and spirited. Fans of such grubby rock 'n' roll could do worse than track this down. (RK)
(Smut, no address)

CHINESE TELEPHONES / DAN PADILLA– split EP

A split EP dedicated to the Fast Castle in San Diego, a place that, while I never got to go to, I sure heard a lot about. Basically, the Fast Castle was a just another in the line of lovely punk houses across the scene that form its lifeblood. DAN PADILLA composes the first side of this split. Featuring members of TILTWHEEL and, I believe, ALTAIRA, they sound like a Florida-meets-San Diego-type band. When I say that, I am talking No Idea/ADD/Recess Records sound, not YELLOWCARD. As for Milwaukee's now sadly defunct CHINESE TELEPHONES, they deliver more of there raw, melodic punk that sounds like it would have been made for fans of the early Lookout catalog. Though I must admit the first song reminds me of FACE TO FACE, or at least that band's good points (yes, readers, FACE TO FACE had some good moments). A winner, and a fine dedication to North Park in general, where they like to party. (JF)
(Fast Crowd, 2721 Wightwan St., San Diego, CA 92104)

CITY X – "Elektriske Svin" CD

Let me begin by stating that, as a rule, all Grand Theft Audio releases are worth picking up and this little gem is no exception. CITY X was one of the most important early Danish bands and, alongside the SODS and the ELECTRIC DEADS, one of my favorites. This disc compiles their impossible to get, and much comped, two 7"s, split 7" and a bunch of demo and live gear. (Their patchy and more new wave LP is missing, which is probably a blessing.) The 7"s are fantastic, taking influence from early UK punk like WIRE (they have a distinct abrasive guitar sound) and early US hardcore, but with a twist. This stuff sounds just as vital and urgent 20-odd years on, not a million miles away from some of the recent Danish bands like NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS, HUL, and much of the Kick 'n' Punch catalogue. Even the demo and live stuff is great, though the records are the real winners here. Flawless. (TB)
(Grand Theft Audio, 501 W. Glenoaks Blvd, PMB 313, Glendale, CA 91202)

THE CLIFTONS – "Rock Out with My Cock Out" EP

This is a re-release of the self-titled CLIFTONS EP. This features their classic songs like "I Love Pussy XOXO," "Fuck and Suck Me," "Get My Fix," and "Drunk as Fuck." I'd rank them right up there with GG and the DWARVES. (HM)
(Malt Soda, PO Box 617127, Orlando, FL 32861, www.maltsoda.com)

COUGARS – "Pillow Talk" CD

A cool sound here with the confusion of the early PIXIES, BIRTHDAY PARTY, and the punk rockness of ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT. Not terribly structured with spastic rhythms and cool horns in the mix. A groove that just works as a whole. Yup. (RL)
(Go Kart Europe, www.gokartrecords.de)

CRAMPS – "All Aboard the Drug Train" LP

Boot of a radio broadcast (which sounds more or less straight from the soundboard: vocals too loud, guitars not loud enough, etc.) of a 1980 show at the late and unlamented Stone. I'm a fan of the Bryan Gregory years, so I enjoyed hearing this, but none of these songs are too remarkably different from the studio versions. Strictly for collectors. (DD)
(no address)

CRUCIAL UNIT – "Everything Went Strunk" CD

I got really confused when I saw this come in for review, because I thought that it was released a while ago (plus the band has been broken up for a while). Then I suddenly realized that this CD is actually a reissue of the CD compilation that originally came out a few years ago. This is a partial discography covering the *Premium Iced Tea* EP, *Moshzilla* EP, KILLED IN ACTION split EP, eleven compilation tracks, and a live set from WPTS. I am almost certain you have heard these knuckleheads from Pittsburg. If not, you can expect some spastic, super fast thrash with a touch of grind thrown in. Hyper vocals spouting off about world-changing topics like iced tea and circle pits. It is ridiculous and absurd and that is why you will like it! (RC)
(Six Weeks, 225 Lincoln Ave., Cotati, CA 94931, www.sixweeksrecords.com)

DEAN DIRG – "26 Kicks to Make the Whole World Pay" CD

Seems like a DEAN DIRG release has appeared in the review section every month this year. If you've found yourself lost in that never-ending shuffle, this CD does a fine job of collecting the carnage. In case you haven't heard, this band owes a great deal to HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE. The resemblance is so uncanny that it often induces a double take. Do they bring more to the table than their mighty Swedish masters? Fuck no! Does it still get the job done? Fuck yes! (MC)
(Dead Beat, PO Box 283, Los Angeles, CA 90078)

DEATH TO TYRANTS / DOGS OF IRE – split 10"

DOGS OF IRE play self-indulgent, loud, surging dude-rock with intricate arrangements. Their lyrics, though vague and trying too hard to be poetic, seem to deal with race and class issues, so I give them props for that. The DEATH TO TYRANTS side (only one song to DOGS OF IRE's two) is an instrumental that's even slower, longer, and more prog-rock in style. Both bands play competently and, I imagine, kick sufficient ass for their genre. (PC)
(Ethospine Noise, PO Box 621, Ringe, NH 03461, www.ethospine.com)

DEFIANCE, OHIO – "Share What Ya Got" LP

I don't know about the acoustic punk rock thing. Punk rock feeds off energy and acoustic

stuff tends to be deep. This is pretty acoustic with some cello mixed in. This reminds me of AGAINST ME! at times and raw indie stuff at others. This is good, especially musically, but when I hear this stuff it just makes me wanna listen to BILLY BRAGG, which is my hang up I suppose. (RL)
(Friends and Relatives, PO Box 23, Bloomington, IN 47402)

DEMORALIZER – "I Just Won a Trophy" EP

Raw, blown out, fast punk that reminds me of some of the stuff coming out of Cleveland these days. The problem is, this release is lacking any all-around quality. The band is not that great and the artwork/cover and production are totally lacking. This should have been released as a demo tape. (RC)
(Demoralizer, 4324 NE 47th Ave., Portland, OR 97218)

THE DEPORTED / CONSIDER THE MEEK / DGS – split CD

A three-way split with each band contributing three songs of, for the most part, pretty wimpy indie-rock. Only the DEPORTED have anything resembling a punk sound, with some gravel-voiced HOT WATER MUSIC/No Idea-style melodic material. CONSIDER THE MEEK are pretty much all-acoustic, and DGS are straight-up indie rock, only picking up the pace on the last song, which is fast pop-punk. Nothing on this CD really stood out to me, although the variety is nice. (AM)
(Leek, www.leekrecords.com)

DESASTRE – "Perigo Iminite" CD

Seven tracks of sturdy, rock-influenced, lead-driven, barebones metal-ly hardcore from Brazil similar to a 1988 Hawker Records/WRECKING CREW-style take on brutal hardcore, where the savagery is packaged within a "good recording" clean rock club-style mix. There are effect-doctored vocals, a prominent kick drum sound, and restrained guitars that occasionally wedge in a solo. While the recording is more than solid, it ends up containing as opposed to enhancing this kind of music—the vocals sound way more powerful on the five bonus live tracks, and the three bonus raw '97 demo tracks seem more cohesive in how things noisily glue together. Lyrics in Portuguese and English, the English ones are familiar DISCHARGE-style haiku and themes. (KS)
(Bucho Discos, A/C Alexandre, CP 12 Centro Santo Andre, Sp 09015-970 BRAZIL, www.buchodiscos.com)

DEFIANCE OF AUTHORITY – "Born in Sin, Come On In" CD

Great punk rock 'n' roll with a country tinge at times. On the punk side think ANN BERETA and on the country side think LUCERO. A strong batch of tunes that almost brings to mind the college rock heyday of the REPLACEMENTS and SOUL ASYLUM. (RL)
(defianceofauthorityrocks@hotmail.com)

DESCONTROLADOS – "Aburrimiento" 7"

According to the little insert that comes tucked away in this 7", DESCONTROLADOS was "one of the first, if not the first punk band in Ecuador," and this 7" is a reissue of their debut 12", which was pressed to the tune of 300 hundred copies in 1987. Something tells me that original 12" isn't gonna be turning up in the Amoeba used bins anytime soon. Anyway, this record is great! The music is driving '77-style punk rock with some quirky bass and guitar parts thrown in. The sleeve photo of the band, which is evidently an exact repro of the 12", shows three dudes sporting the classic safety-pin-and-tape-weird-shit-to-your-clothes punk look we all love so much. This record isn't too far of a cry from some of the more melodic punk from South America in the 80s, and is a must have for any fan of that stuff, or of international punk history in general. This is one of those great reminders that there will likely never be a shortage of great worldwide punk rock to be excited about, either from the past or present. When I first looked at this record, I assumed it was a legit reissue 'cause it comes with a note and looks and sounds great, but on closer inspection there is no address and the matrix numbers are scratched out. Fuck, how am I gonna find this?! Any info on this band would be greatly appreciated! (GN)
(no address)

DICK CHENEY / THE TANGLED LINES – split EP

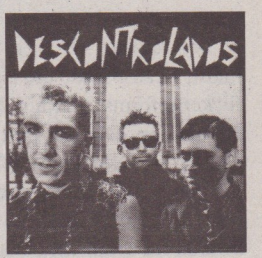
The TANGLED LINES have a strong female vocalist who sings to fast hardcore music. This is nice and powerful. There have been some great women vocalists in hardcore in recent years—UGLY AESTHETIC and FRONTERORISMO, to name a few—now you can add the TANGLED LINES to the list. DICK CHENEY plays good hardcore with hooks and catchy parts. Their sound is really US influenced ala late 90s hardcore. They could have been on any show with LIFE'S HALT during their heyday. A very cool split. (MS)
(Refuse, PO Box 7, 02-792 Warszawa 78, POLAND, www.refuserecords.prv.pl)

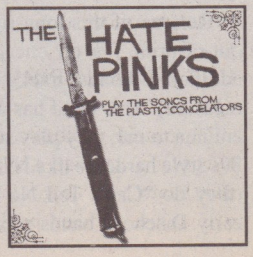
DOGS OF IRE / MARC ANTONY – split EP

MARC ANTONY uses odd time signatures and murky discordant chords, topped with throaty vocals tracked hot, or through some sort of overdrive. Their songs drift musically between tightly wound upbeat noise loops and slow dirge-y, plodding riffs, surged with winding guitar leads, and bridged together with short syncopated *babaBATBAT, bababaBATBAT: BATBATBAT—BAT-BAT-BAT-BAT* parts—a noisier, more soulful DILLENGER ESCAPE PLAN-esque sound but not "hard" or metal sounding. DOGS OF IRE tokes from the same pipe, but their approach is more aggressive and their playing has a desperate feel to it that is, to me, inherently more punk and from the heart. "Fuck Your Booking Agent and Your Spineless Band" shows a musical trajectory above the herd, combining rhythmic noise with some driving DC-influenced avant-hardcore sounds. The screenprinted cover is real nice. (BS)
(Ethospine Noise, PO Box 1611, Riverside, CA 92502, www.ethospine.com)

DOHRN – CD

I was expecting this to be bad punk crap played by young teens with black comb-overs, based on the cover art. Instead my ears are being assaulted by walls of feedback being played by kids with even more outrageous black comb-overs styled with blonde streaks strategically placed into their skulls, and a sound similar to AS THE SUN SETS or DAUGHTERS. They have some typical emotional parts that segue into tech grind riffage. I'm not all that into this sound as there were what seamed like a hundred bands





every other day that had this same exact sound at about the same time SOME GIRLS started putting out records. To make this CD even better, they quote Noam Chomsky in the insert talking about the "socioeconomic order" that's imposing on all human decisions. Okay, okay, we all get that life is going to suck if we don't do something about it, but I don't think these tunes along with a Noam Chomsky quote is going to change anyone's view on life. But then, hey, who am I to shatter anyone's dreams? (NE)
(Ethospine Noise, PO box 1611, Riverside, CA 92502, www.ethospine.com)

DRONGOS FOR EUROPE – "Hotline to Hades" CD

No offence but Birmingham is shite. More power to these Brummie old timers for sticking at it and not caving in to beer bellies, footie, and wife beating. The DRONGOS were one of the better, yet overlooked, bands of the early 80s UK scene. Their *Death's a Career* 7" still gets a spin 'round my yard once in a while. As any follower of my reviews (if there is such a thing) will know, I can't abide the Holidays In The Sun old fucker reformation train that has been increasing momentum over the past few years, but this is actually a pretty decent release. Taking off where the band ended in the mid-80s, this is fast, abrasive UK82 punk rock. No frills, no bullshit… No awards for originality, but just as good as any of the young whippersnappers on Punkcore. Added kudos for surviving in one of the most godforsaken places on earth. (TB)
(www.punkshitrecords.stigon.com)

FEKALE BREKNINGER – "Toilet Rocker" EP

Fuck yes! This fucking foul piece of vinyl is an apropos tribute to Mr. GG ALLIN. This tribute is from April 1999 and the nasty vocals are great! The guitars fucking burn a hole through your ear hole! On side one, you get two of GG's real gems, "Toilet Rocker" and "Hard Candy Cock." These are great songs written when GG ALLIN was very important. Side two features one of Mr. ALLIN's best songs, which will stand the test of time. "Bite It" was covered in an absolutely marvelous fashion a couple of years ago by the mighty BLURTERS from Australia and FEKALE BREKNINGER does a respectful and strong version. (BR)
(Hit Me, www.hitmerecords.com)

F MINUS – "Won't Bleed Me / Fallen Society" CD

Reissue of this long-running band's first two out-of-print 7"s on one handy CD (with some additional bonus tracks thrown on for good measure). This band has always been a bit of an enigma to me; they play super fast, ripping early-80s style hardcore like NEGATIVE APPROACH (they do "Can't Tell No One") or some of the early Dischord bands mixed with almost NAUSEA-esque squeaky female vocals. So by rights they should be putting out records on some super DIY hardcore label, yet they have records out on Epitaph/Hellcat? Weird. Still, this fucking rips, no question. (TB)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092, www.alternativetentacles.com)

FLASCHEN – "You're Negative Baby" EP

Decent-sounding (interesting slightly sludgy guitar tone, lads) but not quite grabbing disc. Maybe a little less mid-tempo swagger and a lot more energy would've helped ("Oh sure, that's your answer to everything"). (DD)
(Trash Mondain, flaschen_nice@yahoo.fr)

F.U.B.A.R. – "Studio Sessions 2002-2004" CD

I hope this band doesn't think I have a personal vendetta against them, but this is the second bad review in a row I'm dishing out for their albums. Sorry, but these guys just bore me to tears. Nothing bad here from these Dutch grinders, just nothing particularly memorable or noteworthy in any of the songs either. Included here is the split CD with CATHETER, split 7" with MATKA TERESA, and the *Fucked Up Beyond All Recognition* (in case you were unclear on the acronym) demo from '02, which is actually probably the best stuff here. Not bad, but not much. (EL)
(2+2=5, www.2plus2equal5.com)

THE FULLY DOWN – "Get Lost in a Movement" CD

A prog-ish punk release here that has chops and riffs galore. A mix of newer BAD RELIGION, PROPAGANDHI, and TAKING BACK SUNDAY. Decent enough, with a lot to absorb musically. (RL)
(Fearless, www.thefullydown.com)

FUN 100 – "Hit It & Quit" CD

Garage-y new wave-y stuff with keyboards. FRANK BLACK-esque vocals over energetic, thrashy pop. A fun romp from this Canadian combo. (RL)
(Hockey Dad, 4150 Brant St., Vancouver BC, V5N 5B4, www.fun-100.com)

GERM ATTACK – "Bomb Party" CD

Power pop from Germany here. This is along the ways of the YUM YUMS as well as older stuff like RUDI and the RECORDS. Although not as solid song-to-song as those bands, this is good release for you popsters. (RL)
(Wolverine, www.wolverine-records.de)

GLASS HEROES – "Get Out Alive" CD

Don't know much about these folks at all. But they have that whole snotty-yet-melodic DEAD BOYS/HEARTBREAKERS/UK SUBS punk sound down. Really down. This is very impressive, actually, with some superb guitaring. They do faithful renditions of the PROFESSIONALS, CHELSEA, and the SAINTS, which is a very accurate gauge of the heights they reach with their originals. (RK)
(Malt Soda, www.maltsoda.com)

GOB SQUAD – "Far Beyond Control" CD

Very catchy melodic punk from these young Danes. I was initially impressed with their hooks and delivery, but everything seemed to start to drag a little towards the end. Still, it's a good album and worth checking out if you like, say, BOMBSHELL ROCKS, or DOWN AND AWAY. (AD)
(Wolverine, Rochusstr. 48 40479, Dusseldorf, GERMANY)

GO FASTER NUNS – "Under Neon Lights" CD

Typical Fat Wreck wannabe band with both male and female vocals. Oh wait they are from Europe so let's just say they want to be on Burning Heart. In all seriousness this is so watered down that it could be the soundtrack to any number of teen coming of age comedies that are going today. Oh, it's on this label, even if it's their European office I should have known nothing good comes out on… (JF)
(Go-Kart Records Europe, www.gokartrecords.de)

GOLDBLADE – "Rebel Songs" CD

The second LP from these Brits who do the punk rock thing with a bit of swamp. More straightforward than their last LP production-wise. This reminds me of TENPOLE TUDOR without the weird vocals, and I'm sure these guys are well schooled in CLASH. A band I'd love to see live. (RL)
(Anarchy Music, 11041 Santa Monica Blvd. #703, Los Angeles, CA 90025, www.goldblade.com)

GOLPE JUSTO – "Revolucion en la Evolucion" EP

This is 25 songs of hostile and heavy hardcore from Puerto Rico that reminds me of SICK OF IT ALL on steroids. A lot of it is straightforward, fast hardcore powered by a metallic crunch. They kick in with the hook-filled SOIA-style breakdowns and then flow back into the straight-up hardcore. Apparently, this is a partial discography of some of their early releases, and it also contains some newly recorded stuff with their latest lineup. If this sounds like it is up your musical alley, then it is worth a listen. But beware of that horrific cover art. (RC)
(Opus Dead, PO Box 35049, 28080 Madrid SPAIN)

GRAVEYARD SHIFT – "Rest Without Peace" CD

Psychobilly quartet, complete with stand-up

bass, devil-locks, and MISFITS/SAMHAIN logos galore, sing songs about decapitation, coffins, virgin blood, killing, and the typical sundry topics beloved of such folks. Nice eye shadow though, guys. Fans of NEKROMANTIX and their ilk won't be disappointed. Everyone else will be yawning. (RK)
(www.deadboywreckerds.com)

HABLAN POR LA ESPALDA / TIDAL – split 10"

The important thing to know when it comes to split releases like this one is knowing which side to play first. It is, in fact, crucial. The TIDAL side of this record is perfect—for middle-aged women to listen to as they snort cocaine off of their Nagel prints. Think the RAPTURE... *lite*! After listening to all three songs the only thing I can think about is breaking this record in half. Your mom *might* like this, but you won't. The bright side of it is that after flipping over the record, the otherwise mediocre hard rock/screamo crossover renderings of Uruguay's HABLAN POR LA ESPALDA miraculously transform into the second coming of "Nervous Breakdown." (VH)
(Cecilesque, cec61@yahoo.fr)

HATEPINKS – "Play the Songs from the Plastic Congelators" EP

The HATEPINKS (ex-GASOLHEADS) decide to resurrect three tracks from a nowheresville early-90s French garage punk band that one of them played bass for. The songs are loose and catchy, and actually deserve the treatment these guys lavish on them, so this zombie deserves the life injected into it. "The Kid With No Brain" is perfect punk rock. Now if the HATEPINKS could rip off an original EP this good... (RW)
(Squoodge, www.squoodge.de.tf)

HEADS HELD HIGH – "Building Up to the Breakdown" CD

Melodic and metallic post-hardcore that sounds like a billion other bands these days. At least HEADS HELD HIGH avoids the scream-then-badly-sing vocals *a la* the STARTING LINE or some other band that you will catch on Fuse every other song. God, I hate CDs. (JF)
(Two Leg Bad, PO Box 795, Berea, OH 44017-0795)

HELLSHOCK – "Shadows of the Afterworld" LP

Yet another HELLSHOCK record reviewed by me! They must be getting tired of this. This time, HELLSHOCK has a bit of a different sound going than that of their previous records. Joel's vocals seem higher and more screamed, maybe because of the delay on certain songs, maybe intentionally; it sounds good to me though. The addition of the former guitarist from BOMB HEAVEN has finally appeared with some more anthemic UK-styled metallic stenchcore songs. I don't think that the recording quality really does them justice, having seen them play live many times, but that really doesn't hold that much weight in the ultra-distorted crust world, does it? I do think that given the proper resources they could fucking crush most heavy metal bands in heaviness alone. One of my friends commented on the speed of this record, comparing it to a DETESTATION record more than a HELLSHOCK record. I do agree that it seems faster than previous material of theirs, but it also has a more of a speed metal sound than Hopper's former band DETASTATION. I like this record, as I'm sure tons of crusters around the globe will. (WK)
(Black Water, PO Box 5223, Portland, OR 97208)

HI-FI KILLERS / LOS DROGOS – split EP

Bluesy rockabilly garage played at a hurried pace and not afraid to let some sweet distortion ring out. Loud and to the point, the tunes will stick, and you'll be wanting more than the two songs that they've committed to this piece of vinyl. If the VIBES had shot their speed instead of snorting it, they would have sounded like LOS DROGOS. The HI-FI KILLERS take the pace down and the melody up, being firmly cemented in the garage scene but with the sing-along appeal of the '79 mod revival scene. Hints of the PRISIONERS ring true while taking in some of the distorted catchiness of the BLACK KEYS and the blown out retro rock of GHETTO WAYS. One great EP and two great bands—now that's a deal. (SD)
(Nicotine, www.nicotinerecords.com)

HIT ME BACK – "Life" LP

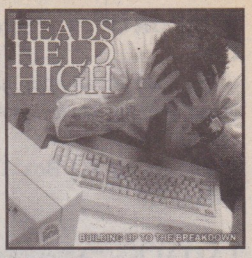
This young SoCal band has put out a variety of releases, but this is their first full-length. What is interesting is that it sounds like they have mellowed a bit, and that some of their songs are slower and more hook driven. Don't get me wrong, the fast thrashier stuff that attracted you to them in the first place is still there, but some of the songs are definitely more melodic. The vocals are very clear and forward in the mix and the lyrics have a very posi slant to them. The bottom line is while I found this solid throughout, it wasn't as aggressive as I was hoping and left me wishing it was heavier and hammered my eardrums a lot harder. (RC)
(625, 625thrash.com)

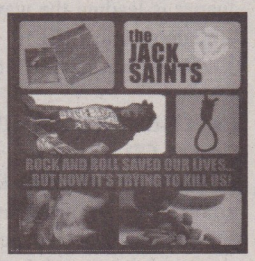
HOMO² – "Gaynessville, FL" CD

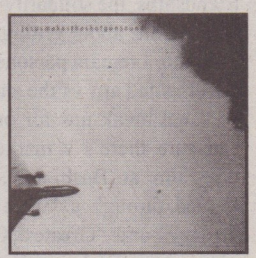
Drums, guitar, and vocals power-duo from Gainesville. The songs have a spiky RAINCOATS sparseness, and the songs tackle life as a radical trans-dyke in a rainbow-flag, straight-acting *L-Word* world, Gay Shame style. For example, they have a song decrying their scene's exodus to Portland, Oregon: "Who's gonna leave my town next? Stop stealing the queers PDX!" It's all done with the sense of humor intact. I'm personally all over this, because my favorite people in the world are dykes that dress like boys. They always have much better style than real boys. I bet HOMO² get the rumps shaking at queerdo basement dance parties all over the country. Especially Portland. (AM)
(Homosaywhat, homosquared@yahoo.com)

HOREHOUNDS – "Rockout With…" CD

All my suspicions regarding the HOREHOUNDS were confirmed within five seconds of hitting play on my CD player. From their cock-sure 'tudes and 50s greaser vibe, it doesn't take a genius to see that they are completely aping the DEVIL DOGS. What made the DEVIL DOGS so goddamn good was that they were able to use these tongue-in-cheek tactics as a springboard for some seriously great rock 'n' roll. With the HOREHOUNDS, it seems like the framework takes over and everything else is an afterthought. Although not without their moments, I can't fully sign off on this one. (MC)
(Wankin' Stiphs, PO Box 6480, Mesa, AZ 85216)







HORROR OF 59 – "Screams from the Cellar" CD

In need of another hard rock band singing about ghouls, horror movies and zombies? Me neither! (MC)
(Sonic Swirl, PO Box 111202, Cleveland, OH 44111)

I ATTACK – "American Dream" EP

Just one of the current crop of ripping Latino bands coming out of Chicago, I ATTACK's newest offering is a slab of retro hardcore. These tracks could have been lifted straight off the *Welcome to 1984* or *P.E.A.C.E.* comps. No frills early-80s hardcore like early ARTICLES OF FAITH…fuck yeah! (TB)
(Criminal IQ, 3540 N. Southport, Chicago, IL 60657)

INSECT WARFARE – "At War with Grindcore" EP

Fuck, this rules. First off, I don't think it's possible to have more perfect artwork on your grind record—giant insects doing battle atop a ruined city…I mean, talk about getting it. And the music contained herein is the perfect soundtrack to said carnage—absolutely devastating blitzkrieg grind, super heavy and distorted, with pummeling blasts paying homage to the best of old-school grind a la NAPALM DEATH, TERRORIZER, 324, and the like. Consisting of members of MACHINE GUN ROMANTICS and PRETTY LITTLE FLOWER, this Texan quartet is leading the way for Gulf Coast Grind Core domination. (EL)
(Six Two Five, www.625thrash.com)

IN THE CROSSHAIRS – "Partners in Crime" CD

Well-done, modern, fast sXe-style hardcore from Denver with rock build-ups, metallic leads that continually switch gears into downbeat double bass driven breakdowns, and gang choruses. Raw shouted vocals convey the anger of broken friendships, the solidarity of friendships, an overly harsh one about getting dumped by a girlfriend (I dunno, I remain personally pleased that I never documented any of the stupidity from the heat of personal break ups for public consumption, but I'm sure there's a market…), and surprisingly take aim at Bush and the Iraq War, though framed through a "what went wrong with our country" and "Greatest Generation" light, Hey, it's a start. Eight tracks ending with a WARZONE cover. Fans of the style will crank this and find the floor is in desperate need of punch! (KS)
(Bloodmoney, www.bloodmoneyrecords.com)

IT BURNS / THE PHENOMS – split EP

IT BURNS delivers two tunes of rock, chock full of yelled choruses and power chords. I like their hard rock sound but their choruses are too repetitive. They could use some editing and arranging. The PHENOMS offer up a single rock tune, much longer, and with lotsa jamming, but more of a complete composition than the IT BURNS tunes. Cool cover art on this mediocre split. (HM)
($5 ppd: Beer Can, PO Box 241, Berwyn, IL 60402, www.beercanrecords.com)

JACK & THE RIPPERS – "I Think It's Over" CD

A collection of recordings from this Swiss band, circa 1978. With only the *Desire* 45 as an official release, this includes an unreleased single and other tracks. This is a good pub-ish punk release *a la* EDDIE & THE HOT RODS and early BUZZCOCKS. Old punk and old Brit enthusiasts will dig this. (RL)
(Dirty Faces)

JACK SAINTS – "Rock and Roll Saved Our Lives" CD

San Francisco veterans JACK SAINTS offer up twenty new tracks on this Italian released compact disc—not at all the strung out, degenerate, rock 'n' roll molestation the back cover leads us to believe, the 'SAINTS seem to have traded in their bourbon bottles for Calistoga mineral water as they deliver pre-packaged delinquency for the MTV generation. It's slick, well-produced, and catchy. If you're looking for the excitement and danger of rock 'n' roll, listening to this is gonna be like drinking Kool-Aid without sugar. Uuuuugh! Oh, ex-NEW BOMB TURKS drummer Bill Randt plays on this. (VH)
(Scarey, Casella Postale 516 10121, Succ. 76, Torino, ITALY)

JESUSMAKESTHESHOTGUNSOUND – CD

What the fuck?! Math metal mixed with screamo, with half-assed production, no lyrics and crummy artwork. Oh, and to top it all off, with that ridiculous band name and you got yourself a real winner…err, I mean wiener. (RC)
(Ethospine Noise, PO Box 1611, Riverside, CA 92502, www.ethospine.com)

JONX – "The Return of the Death of the Legacy of the Revenge of..." CD

Straight-up indie rock in an almost late 80s vein, before emo conceits occupied college practice rooms coast to coast. A three piece that charges forward like the non-Degenerate Sons of LET'S ACTIVE or FIREHOSE. Not bad, not fantastic. Could rip off a very good record in the future though, if they mess with their sound to inject a little more desperation. The elements are here. (RW)
(Mustache, 322 Aurora Ave., Houston, TX 77008)

KING LOUIE ONE MAN BAND – "Chinese Crawfish" LP

……..I'm a fan of KING LOUIE so reviewing this record is a privilege…..!!!!! This boy Louie is as sloppy as they come…..just as sloppy as they can get in Louisiana!!!! KING LOUIE is getting the sound that CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL missed by a long shot…..!!!! There is no "pop music" on this record, just swamp rock in its purest form!!!!!! Listening to this record is like getting fucked by a cock that's soooooooo huge that it's tearing up your insides…….that's something we can *all* relate to!!!!!! Let us all bend over and take the rock 'n' roll penis of KING LOUIE into our tight little shit-chutes…..it'll feel *good*!!!!!! (SW)
(Goner, 2152 Young Ave., Memphis, TN 38104, www.goner-records.com)

KNAUGHTY KNIGHTS – "Death Has Come Over Me" EP

With this, their third single, Memphis' KNAUGHTY KNIGHTS have created something that is far too good to be confined to "side-project" status. The unlikely pairing of Rich Crook (REATARDS and LOST SOUNDS stickman) and Jack Yarber (OBLIVIANS genius) produces some equally unlikely results. First, this is pop…and great, crunchy pop at that. Crook's vocals and songwriting are so strong here that it makes me wonder why he's been hiding behind a drum kit all these years. All three of his tunes far outshine Yarber's contribution, which certainly ain't no slouch either. Aside from being the most surprising, this is easily one the year's top singles. (MC)
(Goner, 2152 Young Ave., Memphis, TN 38104)

KURUMA BAKUDAN / NAPALM DANCE / DESECRATOR / SLUMS - split CD

This is a split between four French grind/noise bands. Between the four bands there are 49 songs on this disc, so it took me awhile to get through the whole thing. Anyway, let's start from the top: KURUMA BAKUDAN has the first 14 tracks. They are really bass-heavy, which isn't bad but they play some goofy grind stuff that I can't really get into. They have some brutal parts but then they bust into some funny pop-punk part and start using the cowbell and some lame-ass bass scale…and just when you think it's over they have some jerk tooting on a horn. The vocals are distorted but the singer talks/sings through every song, which is annoying. All in all KURUMA BAKUDAN doesn't do it for me. Next we got NAPALM DANCE who fills in the noise part of this split with 14 songs that range from super minimalist noise, then go into some straight booty-shaking dance parts. I guess you could call this electro-dance-noise if you had to label it—another band on this split I can't get into. After those first two bands it was almost mind-blowing to hear DESECRATOR playing real blast beats and solid grinding guitars, but the vocals are what really pulls this recording together. It's not like they are out of this world; they actually sound a lot like the first singer from CANNIBAL CORPSE but more distorted, like he is cupping the mic. His vocal patterns are

drawn out and he doesn't always follow the music, which is good. I find that when vocalists just follow what the drummer or guitar is doing it just gets tired. Out of the 49 songs on this split, I would say that the nine songs that DESECRATOR plays really pull this disk out of the throwaway bin. Last, but not least, we've got ten songs from SLUMS, who play a more classic grind sound akin to early NAPALM DEATH and ENT by using the simple two-riffs-per-song routine, and high vocal/low vocal trade off, keeping it simple but brutal. If you come across this four-way split and you are a grind fan, I would buy it just for the DESECRATOR and SLUMS tracks. True grind coming out of France doesn't surprise me because France has always had a killer grind and black metal scene, it's just that these bands seem to have more of a DIY feel to them, but still keep it real. (NE)
(Galeres Graves Prod.)

LAGWAGON – "Resolve" CD

One of the SoCal melodic hardcore originals is back after several years with a new full-length. It doesn't veer much from the previous six or seven lengthy efforts. Which means you do get 12 tracks of sophisticated, thinking person's driving melodic hardcore. I suspect folks reading this will already know whether or not they want this. And you're probably right, too. Me, I was excited to get this it. (RK)
(Fat Wreck Chords, www.fatwreck.com)

LEBENDEN TOTEN – "State Laughter" 12"

Arrgghh, this is awesome! Fucking raw and super-distorted hardcore from these PDX mainstays. It's nice to imagine some clean-cut "hardcore" kid listening to this record and being totally baffled and/or appalled by the racket coming from the speakers. This short 12" has all of the elements that have made this band a favorite of mine since their first EP a couple of years ago—relentless tupa-tupa drumming, wildly noisy guitars, driving, DISORDER-like bass parts, and the angry but somehow still catchy vocals. Check out the ultra-memorable, ultra-punk song "Blood Drinkers"—it is the perfect combination of UK82 punk and Japanese style damaging noise. The next song, "Revelation of the Method," sounds like an actual drill recorded the guitar part! I have to note that I've always appreciated that this band is the full package as well—the lyrics are spot-on, and the album art looks great (especially the back cover, which looks suspiciously like the back of the first DEZERTER LP). Track this shit down, punk! (GN)
(Wicked Witch, PO Box 3835, 1001 Ad Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS)

LUGOSI – "Edward 40oz. Hands" CD

Rock-steady pop punk out of San Francisco with straight ahead 4/4 punk beat, driven riffage, occasional harmonized vocal choruses, and an absolute unlikeness to their raw and gritty Bay Area neighbors ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT and THIS IS MY FIST. This is all that ambitious fluffy pop stuff that you either love or *fucking* hate. One thing that gets tired about this recording is that the vocals are often out of key; this is highlighted even further by the in-key backing vocals especially notable on the harmonized parts. No big deal, but something to think about if, as your publicity one-sheet indicates, you are building a reputation for strong ticket sales, and have earned a slot on the DIY Stage of the 2005 Vans Warped Tour. Yawn… (BS)
(Hangover, 257 Lincoln Way, San Francisco CA, 94122, www.lugosimusic.com)

LES MACCHABEES – LP

Armed with a platter full of originals and an attitude stinking of those young garage mop-tops of days-gone-by comes LES MACCHABEES. Simple, organ-heavy, groove-laden 60s-inspired R 'n' B, riddled with infectious pop and shaken to the rough. Tightly locked without surrendering any of that much-loved amateurs-trying-to-bust-it-big feel that the garage sound owes so much to. Playing it straight, never fucking with the formula like a lower budget CYNICS, which wins my hard-to-come by affections. So if ya feel like giving the car burning a rest and have had enough of stickin' it to the C.R.S, try checking out my new French friends. (SD)
(macchabees@yahoo.ca)

MAKILADORAS – "Discography 2001-04" CD

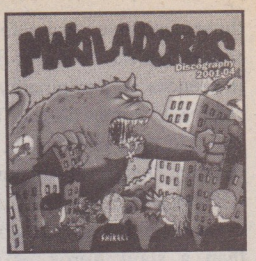
This is a compilation CD done fairly well by two Malaysian labels covering Dutch anarcho thrashers MAKILADORAS' recorded output. This CD includes the band's first record (a 10"), their split 7" with RADIO BIKINI, and a comp track. This avoids the main problem of the CD age, that being too much music on one disc. Instead, this CD is about the length of a proper full-length. The music itself is fast, female-fronted hardcore with angry punk-political lyrics (with explanations) and modern production; there are also some cool melodic guitar leads every so often. There is also an interesting piece in the liners outlining the history of decriminalized squatting in the Netherlands, alongside some cool photos and fliers. (GN)
(Bullwhip, c/o Borhan, No. 9 Jalan 3/4g, 43650 Bandar Baru Bangi, Selangor Darul Ehsam, MALAYSIA)

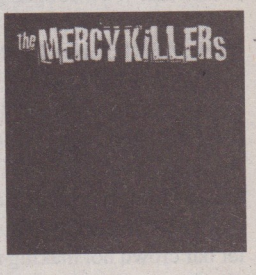
CHAZ MATTHEWS – "Amazing Graceless" CD

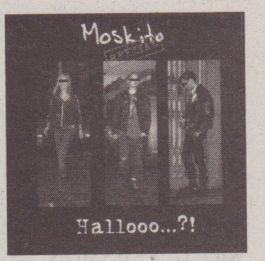
A solo artist release from the former DIMESTORE HALOS front man. Good power pop that reminds me of the STARJETS as well as Stiv Bators stuff. The bleak lyrics are actually much darker than the music. Mix in a happy beach song or a sappy love song to ease the pain dude. This guy played everything on this, Rikk Agnew style. A very good full-length. (RL)
(Full Breach Kicks, www.fullbreach77.com)

AS MERCENÁRIAS – "O Comeco do Fim do Mundo" LP

I am so psyched to have gotten this to review! Someone put the first song on this reissue on a mix tape for me a while back and I freaked out. It totally sounded like a rawer, less emotionally distant SLANT 6. Eerily so, only this band is from the early 80s Brazilian punk scene, and I am quite sure Christina Billotte had never heard of them in early 90s DC, seeing as their records have been out of print till now. Anyway, I digress… This is totally exciting, exuberant post-punk. It reminds me of a million bands and ideas. I read somewhere that they were associated with that whole 99 Records scene out of NYC (ESG, LIQUID LIQUID, etc.), and you can definitely hear something of that sound, but it's way more aggressive and political. I hate reviews that just list reference points, but seriously this band remind me of so many awe inspiring bands at the same time as being really creative and exciting on their own terms. I hear echoes of the FALL, the SLITS, GANG OF FOUR, PIL… I know







those are four disparate bands with separate sounds but this record is the best combination of influences and originality. Plus, the liner notes reference some classic Brazilian hardcore as being in their peer group, (which Golnar nerded out on). This is a really punk sounding record but it's also a true representation of punk as an idea, as an adventure and possibility-filled affair rather than a staid Xerox of some zillion-year-old generic sound. (LG)
(Soul Jazz, www.souljazzrecords.co.uk)

THE MERCY KILLERS - "Shrapnel" CD

The MERCY KILLERS' debut is simple punk with tasty riffs and power chords. Songs like "Malcontent," "We Came to Fuck," "Hey Asshole," and "Can't Take Your Shit No More" are no-frills, as are the tunes themselves. I picture them in any city playing to a small lackluster bar crowd not making much of an impression on anyone. They're good, but kinda forgetful. (HM)
(Dance Masochist, www.themercykillers.com)

MESRINE – "I Choose Murder" CD

Damn, this band just keeps getting better with every release. When I first heard these Quebecois grinders on their split with DAHMER a few years back, I didn't think much of 'em. They kept at it though; 2004's split 12" with DEPRESSION was great, and now this full-length is probably their best yet. Not terribly original stuff, but so well done, with a great heavy thrashing guitar sound and killer riffs, the album stands on its own merit completely. Reminding me most of HEMDALE, this is heavy, mean death/grind that never relents in speed and intensity. The serial killer thing (every song is named after, and presumably about, a different serial killer) has been done to death (ha) by MACABRE and most everyone else in the genre, but still, fans of the genre are gonna eat this up like Jeffrey Dahmer with a teen from the suburbs. (EL)
(Crimes Against Humanity, www.cahrecords.com)

MOSKITO SPEZIAL – "Hallooo...?!" EP

Rough 'n' ready, catchy Kraut pogo punk. Six songs, all pretty catchy, even though they're sung in German, and a guitar sound like a bee caught in a jar. You can't really go wrong with that, can you? (AM)
(Drunk'n'roll, info@drunknroll.de)

NAMES FOR GRAVES – "Version 2.1" EP

Hailing from Clevo, this straightedge band reminds me at times of a more modern hardcore version of SBV from San Diego. Aside from the intro being too long (it takes up half of the first side), this is a solid hardcore release. As the record progressed, I liked each song better than the next. If bands like CHAMPION or SINKING SHIPS are your thing, then check these guys out. (CC)
(Refuse, PO Box 7102-792, Warsawa78, POLAND)

NOFX – "Your Hubcaps Cost More Than My Car" EP

…this EP is a part of a series of singles to feature cover art by the very fans of NOFX…I believe there is to be 12….or is it 14??? Anyway, the back covers are puzzle pieces that make one big lame picture/poster…..!!!! This means there's going to be a shitload of NOFX singles to soon hit the malls…..!!!! How unfortunate indeed!!!!! I know there's millions of kids out there that relate to the sound of NOFX and consider them punk rock crusaders…..however, in the world that I come from I see them as schlock-meisters…..same with most of the "artists" in the Fat catalog…..!!!!! *All schlock*!!!!! Listening to NOFX is like having a meal at McDonalds…..they're the sound-track for a high school football game…..a sweatshirt to buy at the mall…!! Within this fluffy, generic, commercial world we live in, NOFX fits in perfectly without any real struggle…..they are completely meaningless and therefore ideal for mass mindless consumption…in other words, this is total shit!!!!!! (SW)
(Fat Wreck)

NOTHING LEFT TO LOSE – "The Last Battle Hymn" CD

God is alive and well in the basement. If the title wasn't a bit of a giveaway, the band all individually, and collectively, thank God The Redeemer. Unfortunately, there's not much of redemptive value in this religious mumbo-jumbo masquerading as radical/DIY. Liberation theology it certainly ain't. How about embarrassingly crap. NOTHING LEFT TO LOSE calls for Revolution. I say bring back the days when we fed 'em to the lions. (RK)
(Zero Youth)

OFFENDERS – "Wanted By Authority 1981-1985" CD

If you told me I had to choose between living in Texas and Cambodia in the late 70s, I'd have to sleep on it...actually, fuck Texas. But for that very reason, the kids were restless and they were fucking pissed! Texas, with its climate of frustration brought us the greatness of the STAINS (MDC), REALLY RED, the DICKS, and the OFFENDERS. While MDC and the DICKS wised up and moved to San Francisco, the OFFENDERS stuck it out and continued to play ferocious hardcore in the most wretched of the red states. Their track on the *P.E.A.C.E.* compilation turned a few heads, but the band ultimately fizzled out in '86 with little notoriety. Hard-hitting, fast, and to the point, this jaw-dropping thirty-track CD (more complete than the Grand Theft Audio release) includes the *Lost Causes*, *Fight Back*, and *I Hate Myself* 7"s along with both LPs, and doesn't let up until it's all over. (VH)
(Kangaroo, Middenweg 13 1098 AA, Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS)

OLD LADY DRIVERS – "Regurgitation" CD

You know, all bootleggers might not be scum. Some, like whoever put out the CD of this beyond-impossible-to-find cult classic, are actually doing a great service to mankind. But that doesn't mean they're not complete fucking idiots. You release a well-deserved boot with great sound, and then feel compelled to tack on 16 tracks, 16 horribly-recorded live tracks, of a completely different band (EXTREME NOISE TERROR) at the end? What in the fuck were you thinking? In any case, New Jersey's OLD LADY DRIVERS was one of the classic first batch of early Earache grind bands, alongside contemporaries UNSEEN TERROR, SPAZZTIC BLUR and of course NAPALM DEATH, and possibly the second-ever true American grindcore band, behind Ohio's REPULSION. *Old Lady Drivers*, their debut full-length from 1988 is one of the few albums from that period that was never repressed and never pressed at all on CD. I'd never even laid eyes on this album before, and tales of finding rogue copies of the LP were the stuff of lore amongst my friends. (My pal Mike has a story of missing the last copy in the "O" bin mere seconds after Max 625 walked out the store with the catch.) So it is a truly great now that this classic is available again. First off, the sound is quite good—not a noticeable dub, and indeed might actually be the "original studio master source sound" as claimed on the back. The songs are great too. I didn't expect the degree of experimentation, which would become guitarist James Plotkin's trademark in years to come to be present at such an early stage, but even in this raw proto-grind, he still manages a surprising amount of dexterity and catchy riffage, especially on the brilliant "Wisdom Lost." The drumming is tight and blasting, but the real treats are the cackled vocals and moronic but amusing lyrics of Alan Dubin (later of KHANATE), who really gets creatively gross in his relentless assault on the geriatric community at large. Also included are the songs from the split 7" with ASSUCK from 1990 and the 1987 seven-song *Bathroom's Rule* demo from REGURGITATION, a pre-O.L.D. incarnation. Having finally gotten to hear this, I gotta say the long wait has been well worth it and this long-lost gem is certainly deserving of its legacy—just be sure you're listening to the right band on the CD. (EL)
(Old Lady Drivers, PO Box 6322, Huntington Beach, CA 92622-5221)

ORIGINAL THREE – "Been Dealt a Losing Hand" CD

An eyesore cover hides a good-sounding record (but then, music is about *hearing* and not necessarily *viewing*, correct?). The ORIGINAL THREE are introspective lyric-wise, very outgoing, expansive and far reaching music-wise—the tunes sway and swing, never gaining *too* much velocity or giving too much away. The band buzzes along with utter confidence and conviction, armed with catchy tunes and the right kind of style. Simple blues for complicated days and long, drawn-out nighttimes. *Been Dealt a Losing Hand* is clearly informed by fellow Southerners the REATARDS and LOST SOUNDS (Jay Reatard and Alicja Trout have their hands in the recording one way or another, so it's no coincidence), but the THREE are *unique*. Pain-free listening. (JH)
(Empty, PO Box 12301, Portland, OR 97212, www.emptyrecords.com)

PERIFERIA S.A. – CD

If labels want to impress us with these promo CDs, it doesn't help one fucking bit when they're too stingy to send 'em in a jewel case. C'mon, I'm probably in a bad mood as it is so fork over the thirty two cents! I only mention this because this CD made it into my hands minus the back cover. The little info I have to go on is in a foreign language (Portuguese?) and I'm only guessing that these guys are Brazilian… Anyway, PERIFERIA S.A. plays fast, aggressive hardcore that's catchy and has a nice rock 'n' roll edge to it. Eighteen tracks total, closing out with a great cover of the ZEROS "Wild Weekend." I am actually somewhat impressed. (VH)
(no address)

PHOENIX FOUNDATION – "Falling / Another Day"

From the looks of this you might be thinking, eeeeeeemo. The lyrics printed on the back would seem to confirm this, with the opening lines, "What happened to our lives / We can't go on like this," and "I don't know how to tell you / Lately I've been so down," respectively. Well, it's not unemo, but it's way better than I expected. The songs are lurchy and melodic, like slower HÜSKER DÜ stuff or, if it's not too obscure, the VAGRANTS. This Finnish band would probably be a little too much in the vein of radio-oriented alternative rock if it weren't for their obviously DIY punk-rooted aesthetics, exemplified by the stark black-and-white poster sleeve, featuring a black bird sillhouette. It's an enjoyable record, but in a slightly guilty way for an ultra hardcore punker like myself. (PC)
(Stonehenge, BP 46, 33031 Bordeaux Cedex, FRANCE, www.stonehengerecords.com)

PHOSPHOR – "Granola" 12"

Re-Force brings us another interesting and obscure 12" EP reissue. Phosphor sounds like Germany 1980, paying close attention to what immediately came before them (BIG BALLS & THE GREAT WHITE IDIOT and PVC) yet fully embracing a new, international take on hardcore. This is the sort of thing one would find on *Welcome to 1984* or documented in the early issues of *MRR*. Pretty cool. (MC)
(Re-Force, Wohlerhof 4, 30900 Wedemark, GERMANY)

THE PLAGUE MASS – "Visitation" CD

Another in the seemingly endless stream of mediocre melodic metalcore bands from Europe. These Austrians' entry is way too slick and polished, but I'm sure that's how they want it, as melodic and clean cut as this all sounds, with tons of Swedish IN FLAMES guitar licks and pre-planned mosh transitions. Really not into this at all, and even if I was I don't think this would cut the metalcore mustard. (EL)
(Noise Appeal, www.noiseappeal.com)

POLIDICKS – "Mutenation" CD

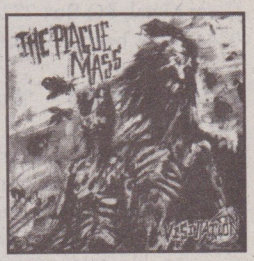
Aw, man, this really is not so good. Had potential—the first couple tracks had some good old-school thrashing guitars, but they blew it with a string of embarrassingly bad riffs and the most irritatingly distracting way-too-high-in-the-mix bass sound ever. It sounds like some fretless six-string music dork playing with a B-grade DRI knockoff and, no, it doesn't work. Stick to sculpture—the little mutanoid creatures on the front and back cover are dope. (EL)
(Wounded Paw, www.woundedpaw.com)

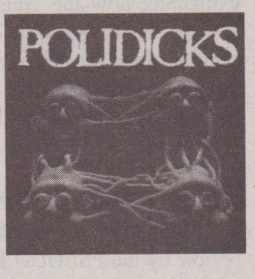
POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT – "Skate and Create" EP

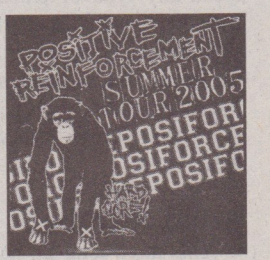
This generation's DYS? Though occasionally nearing generic youth crew thrash territory, this EP by Boston's POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT definitely has enough urgency and good songwriting to hold my attention. The more I listen, the more I like what they're doing here... Eight tracks, mostly breakneck speed but with some variety in tempo here and there to keep things interesting. Rough production, lots of energy. Despite the name, many of the songs on here have a darker tone, which I tend to prefer. I only wish the singer would try for a little nuance in his vocals instead of screaming his lungs out every moment he opens his mouth. To answer the question posed at the beginning of the review: Well, not quite classic XClaim material yet, but a solid release nonetheless. (CS)
(Nation of Finks, 2 Hano Street, Allston, MA 02134, www.nationoffinksrex.tk)

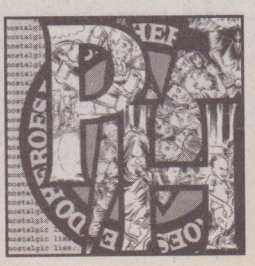
POST EXTREME STRESS DISORDER – "Politikarepoizonekurvae" CD

This rules! Where all other developing hardcore scenes are credited for running off the art school dropouts that were an integral part of '77 explosion, the realities of pre-fall-of-the-Iron-Curtain Poland seemingly fused new wavers, artists, hardcore kids, and other marginalized weirdos into unique hybrids of new wave and punk like SIEKIERA, KRYZYS, TZN XENNA, and ABADDON. This adventurous 2005 studio project from the also-dating-from-that-time-period vocalist of TRAGEDIA and the guitarist of POST REGIMENT brilliantly hearkens back to that offbeat new wave/punk fusion with 14 stark, mid-tempo, angular compositions that break into unbelievable, and I mean *unbelievable*, they-don't-make-them-like-this anymore, rocking, basic, stripped-down, urgent, hook-laden hardcore songs akin to the more stomping moments of POST REGIMENT, MOSKWA, ARMIA, or RATTUS. They lend texture and complexity far beyond a 1-2 thrash record, but the songs manage to retain an urgent mood and feeling. The recording is modern, with noises and sound effects inventively squirming in and out and over it; the guitar parts are simple and great; the vocals are burly ÄÄRITILA/later TERVEET KADET type throaty-ness; the lyrics (sung in Polish) are almost existential and then pop back into classic pissed-off punk. The overall feeling, delivery, and intent of









this album are in no way retro, but vital and classic international hardcore. This might be the best full-length I've heard all year—*this rules*. (KS)
(Trujaca Fala, PO Box 13, 81 806 SOPOT 6, POLAND, www.trujacafala.com)

POTTY MOUTH SOCIETY – CD

Despite the band's dumb name (PMS, get it?) and potentially-awful song titles like "Pornographic TV" and "Cocaine Cowboy," this disc has some pretty decent tracks, almost all with a driving 1-2-1-2 beat and some good melodic vocals. I don't think this band is trying to do a retro 80s thing, but it's hard not to think about influences like DESCENDENTS, DEAD KENNEDYS (maybe), and most obviously, early BAD RELIGION. They're probably the band at the show who nobody pays attention to 'cause they've got long hair and are just doing their own thing without worrying about being cool. I'd probably be into them for about five songs, then head for the liquor store, myself. (PC)
(Beer Metal, PO Box 77244, Seattle, WA 98117-0244, www.beermetalrecords.com)

PROPAGANDHI – "Potemkin City Limits" CD

Another great full-length from one of my favorites and an important band, to boot. Lefty politics with passion and power. A little less humor and a bit more rocking than the last. I swear I hear a little RUSH in the riffing at times. The press release for this is also a hoot with its explaining how the guitar player unexpectedly left the band but was replaced with a more accomplished musician. A chat room frenzy for the rumor mill. Certainly one of best punk/hardcore bands today. (RL)
(Fat Wreck)

PSEUDO HEROES – "Nostalgic Lies" CD

Hmm, this is the second release I have had to review by the PSEUDO HEROES. Like the last PSEUDO HEROES I reviewed, *Nostalgic Lies* lacks any type of punch or originality in its melodic, Warped Tour-friendly songs. Sure the band members can play their instruments, but if the songs suck as much as anything released by the band ASIA, do you really care? (JF)
(I Ate Her, 3130 E. 78th St, Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076)

RADIO DEAD ONES – "Holy Ghost" EP

This three-song EP combines anthemic mid-speed punk, sing-along choruses, and the rawest vocals south of TERVEET KADET for a completely memorable release. The title track in particular has a powerful, yet nostalgic feel that puts it on a different level. The consistently thoughtful lyrics are equal to the catchy tunes. Strongly recommended, but be forewarned that there's only 333 copies. (SS)
(Squoodge, www.squoodge.de.tf)

RADIO REELERS – "The Next Best Thing" LP

Before I even put the needle—yes, I call it a "needle"—on the vinyl, I can tell you that this is going to rock. How can I tell you this? Well, I've heard other RADIO REELERS records and they've all rocked. I also had the opportunity to see them live just a couple of weeks ago and, well, they rocked. I will now take the time to listen to it. I have confirmed what I already knew to be true. This is straightforward, mid- to faster-paced punk rock 'n' roll. It's catchy as fuck and it's actually fun. It's okay to be punk and have fun. These guys prove it. And the vinyl version has a bonus track. Yeah. (KK)
(Dead Beat, PO Box 283, Los Angeles, CA 90078, www.dead-beat-records.com)

RAISE THE RED LANTERN -"Breathe Fire" CD

Musically this band is your basic metallic guitar-heavy screamo. There were a few hard charging moments of riffing that I found appealing, but overall this is a bit to techy and melodic for my taste. Nu-metal? Nah, just Nu-hardcore. (RC)
(Seventh Rule, 2303 Montrose, Floor One, Chicago, IL 60618, www.seventhrule.com)

REAL SWINGER – "Rubber Ball" CD

Oh how those Italians have a firm handle on popped-up punk. This is as good as it gets for a sing-along pajama party. REAL KIDS fans will be lapping this up, with its hints of early-80s LA. This has some garage leanings thrown in mix, along with the snarl of the young QUEERS and attitude of the fresher faced ANGRY SAMOANS. Charming. (SD)
(Marco Cicchella, Via Orsini 5-80121, ITALY, www.therealswingers@tiscali.it)

REATARDS – "Teenage Hate" LP

Somehow, when it first came out, I missed hearing the REATARDS' *Teenage Hate*, even though people like ol' Tom Hopkins were raving about them. A few months later I remember finally getting to hear it and being totally blown away. Here was a band that caught the youthful don't-give-a-fuck attitude of early GG ALLIN crossed with the sound of fellow Memphis folks the OBLIVIANS. If that wasn't enough, this was played by some kids who were keeping the Memphis rock meter roaring at a high pace. Well, fast forward to now and we now know from Jay and Ryan's other projects that this band was no fluke, but rather a giant kick-down-the-door-and-announce-my-presence-to-the-world release. *Teenage Hate* doesn't just stand the test of time six years later, but has actually gotten better with age. A great release, now finally repressed. (JF)
(Goner, www.goner-records.com)

REGULATIONS – "Electric Guitar" LP

Okay you fucks, you're getting a second chance to get, uh, two of the best EPs of 2003! With *Electric Guitar*, Havoc Records bring us the *Survive in the City* and *Destroy* EPs along with seven new tracks from Umeå, Sweden's REGULATIONS. The new tracks continue to veer away from the hardcore sound of ETA in favor of a slower, more melodic sound that would fit perfectly onto the *Decline of Western Civilization* soundtrack. With songs like "Hollywood Smile" and "Disease" they've got the classic 80s sound nailed. The vocals...well, the vocals are great! They haven't lost any of the energy or intensity. The *Survive* EP is definitely the best thing they've done, but they're still one of the most exciting punk bands around. Limited blue vinyl for mailorder and even more limited blue and white vinyl at live shows. (VH)
(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

REIGNING SOUND – "I'll Cry / Your Love"

Two songs off REIGNING SOUNDS' smash hit LP *Too Much Guitar*. Both are relatively peppier, more rockin', original songs off the album with slightly different mixes. These versions have cleaner sounding vocals, so if that will make you enjoy the songs more, you need to pick this up. If you like the LP versions as they are, you probably won't need this. The decision is yours. If it were up to me, I'd pick this up. (CK)
(Slovenly, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504)

RENO DIVORCE – "Naysayers and Yesmen / Laugh Now Cry Later" CD

Dimestore SOCIAL DISTORTION is the first thing that springs to mind. Same imagery, same theme, and very similar sound. It's not bad—in fact it's pretty good—but don't you think at some point, maybe after their second or third practice, that one of them would say, "Hey guys, this is dope, our shit is tight...but don't you think we sound a little too like SOCIAL D?" Anyway, this is a collection of all their stuff, and like I said, it's really good. I think they should call themselves the MIKE NESS MONSTER—that would be funnier. (AD)
(Street Anthem, PMB 218, 1530 Locust, Philadelphia, PA 19102)

REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY – CD

It would appear that ex-ARTICLES OF FAITH/ALLOY frontman Vic Bondi has spent the last couple of years sitting in front of Fox News and CNN writing down every thought that comes into his head as the bile rises in his throat from watching the black comedy of the Bush administration's foreign policy mistakes play across his screen. It's been a while since we've heard from him musically (if you don't count the acoustic versions of AOF songs on the recent reissues), and to help him out on his return to the stage he's drafted JAWBOX/BURNING AIRLINES strummer/singer J. Robbins. If you can imagine Bondi's guttural wail fronting an occasionally heavier JAWBOX, that's basically what you're paying for here. It's more than passable, if

a little overproduced. I believe it was a studio project, and that's mostly what it sounds like. Lyrically, we're looking at a collection of direct, progressive/liberal reactions to the Iraq war. The ideas aren't particularly groundbreaking, but I'm sure it was cathartic for Bondi to be able to get these words out. The highlight of the record is a cover of AOF's "False Security," retitled "Patriot Act" for 21st century relevance. (AM)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092, www.alternativetentacles.com)

RIOT BRIGADE – "Here's Our Answer" CD

Rousing "street punk" (can we still use that description?) out of Germany. Fiercely anti-fascist and anti-state, and whilst the lyrics are little one-dimensional, I can totally get behind the sentiments. Musically, it's fast and aggressive like the first ANTI-FLAG LP or even the more recent PISTOL GRIP stuff. Well worth checking out. (TB)
(www.concretejunglestore.com)

RODRIGUEZ – "Black Finger Tips" 10"

Another great band from France. This is some catchy garage music with a snotty punk singer. The tunes have a BUZZCOCKS-esque fuzz, but the singer could be fronting a mid-90s Estrus band. He's got that kind of flat, kind of bored, and kind of full of himself attitude. Excellent. (CK)
(Relax O-Matic Vibrator, 13 Rue Terrusse, 13005 Marseille, FRANCE, relaxomatic@netcourrier.com)

ROGUE STATE – "Statues That Fall" CD

Okay, if you ask me to choose between having sex and watching someone masturbate, I'm, uh, gonna say sex. ROGUE STATE on the other hand begs to differ, as they assault us with 30 minutes of lubed-up wanking that never seems to reach a climax. The Riverside, CA four-piece demonstrates their technical proficiency as they exploit the style of Ebullition screamo popularized by the likes of YAPHET KOTTO with their lack-luster dynamics, tedious instrumentals, and especially obnoxious radio friendly harmonics… There are so many bands out there singing songs about how alone and hurt they are; I think it's about time they get their acts together, and move to a desert island for a group hug. Let's bone out! (VH)
(Ethospine, PO Box 1611, Riverside, CA 92502)

ROSENBOMBS – EP

Fast, relentless hardcore from the Bay Area in the classic straight-up powerviolence vein of CAPITALIST CASUALTIES, HELLNATION, and CHARLES BRONSON. Nice raw sound, constant speed, intelligent lyrics, and manic energy all speak of good things to come from this young new band. Watch out, Trustkill. (EL)
(Six Two Five, www.625thrash.com)

RÖVSVETT – "Roll-Mats Bjuder Pa Bullkalas & Kaffe: 1984-1987" LP

Buzzsaw searing guitars cut short blasts of treble-driven hardcore fury hammered by harsh vocal roar, Sweden's RÖVSVETT ("Ass Sweat") has pock-marked the Swedish hardcore landscape for over 20 years. This 27-song "early years" collection contains their ram-charging 1985 debut EP, part of their 1984 demo, re-recorded demo takes from 1987 and their second EP from 1986. Bridging the "Golden Age" and "Silver Age" of Swedish hardcore, RÖVSVETT started with the simplistic bashing of early Swedish hardcore akin to the let-it-rip charge of HUVUDTVÄTT, SOD, and MOB 47, and evolved with the time to the speeding stop-and-start complexity and oddball twists of their mid- to late-80s contemporaries, RAPED TEENAGERS, SVART SNÖ, etc. Less comprehensive (or overreaching) than the *Fatal Farts* CD of years back, which spanned into the bands early-90s material, this is more concise in impact, and features great old photos, an all-Swedish lyric sheet, and classic eardrum detonation at high speed. (KS)
(Six Weeks, 225 Lincoln Avenue, Cotati CA 94931, www.sixweeksrecords.com)

RUINER – "What Could Possibly Go Right?" CD

Baltimore's RUINER are plowing the furrow of the youth crew revival, but rather than harvesting the past, they are planting the seeds of progress. Wow, I should get a Rock Journalism Pulitzer for that metaphor. Seriously though, they're updating the slightly metallic, anthemic approach of bands like MAJORITY OF ONE. I have to say I like this a lot. I also have to tip my hat in the direction of the artwork—while almost every other band that sounds like this goes for the same old finger-pointing photo, collegiate lettering, lots of Xs style, RUINER have taken an original approach to the both the cover art and the lettering. Top marks all round for this release. (AM)
(1917, PO Box 2511, El Segundo, CA 90245, www.1917records.com)

SABOTEUR – CD

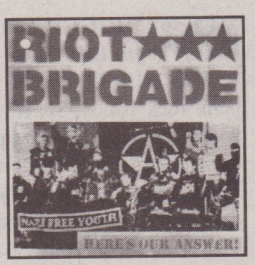
Not punk. Desert rock with some indie styings. Not bad if you are into this stuff. Actually SABOTEUR is quite good at what they do. Unfortunately what they do should not be in the pages of *MRR*. Just one person's opinion of what doesn't qualify as punk. (JF)
(End Sounds, PO Box 684743, Austin, TX 78768 www.endrecords.com)

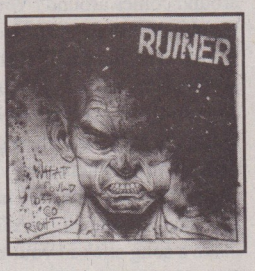
THE SADDEST LANDSCAPE – "A Promise Was Made..." 10"

The curse of the bambino may have been broken, but as the SADDEST LANDSCAPE aptly suggests with their name, Boston still has a long way to go when it comes to redeeming itself musically... I'm shocked. I'm confused. Did not Mike Lucas mercilessly slaughter the last of the emos during his drunken crusades across the East Coast?!?! Fuck. I probably have a concussion, what do I know! Painfully cute, emotive and redundant, I can't take this pink label 10" (complete with string bound pocket sized lyric book!) seriously. If this came out twelve years ago it might have been a different story, but these kids are just going through the motions! Nevertheless, if you're the one who's been bidding on those FRAIL, SAETIA, and INDIAN SUMMER records on eBay, these four songs are sure to keep your heart pumping until the arrive. (VH)
(Alone, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126, www.alonerecords.com)

SADO-NATION – "Future Past, Present, Tense" CD

A great collection from this Portland band that goes back to 1980. Most known for their *Killed by Death* hit "Mom and Pop Democracy," this includes their first EP and LP, an unreleased LP, a more recent EP, and a few live tracks. The unreleased LP is the real score here, with vocals from the singer on the original EP. Great classic West Coast punk! Also, I saw these folks over the summer with their second singer still in





the lineup and they put on a very punk rocking show. (RL)
(Grand Theft Audio)

SCATTERBOX – "Sudden Movements" CD

Eleven songs of fast, melodic hardcore punk. The production is solid and the guitar has some nice embellishments that set SCATTERBOX apart from the rest of the Marshall stack/chorus pedal crowd, but musically this album is pretty one-dimensional. There's absolutely nothing wrong with this, and it's definitely not mediocre, but I'm having a hard time finding a lot of positive things to say about it. I think that's more my fault than the fault of the band. It's fast, it's loud, it's catchy, but I'm not hearing anything I haven't heard before done better. (AM)
(Clickpop, 1220 N. State St, Bellingham, WA 98225, www.clickpoprecords.com)

SCREECHING WEASEL – "Weasel Mania" CD

I hope this isn't the first of many SCREECHING WEASEL "Best Of" sets to come *a la* the RAMONES or COCKSPARRER. With that said, if you were not a pop punk rocker in the 90s you probably don't know that "the" pop punk band wasn't GREEN DAY but was in fact SCREECHING WEASEL. They were on fire! Great album after great album. Here we have a collection of songs from most of their LPs. Many favorites left off, but what the hell. A great collection for the masses as well as the underground. (RL)
(Fat Wreck)

SICK56 / HIGGINS++ – "New Day, New Enemy" split EP

This split EP presents two top-notch English punk rock bands. SICK56 starts the ball rolling with melodic sing-a-long punk that is reminiscent of The Riot City / No Future label, 1982 era of English punk. "Losing the War" has all the earmarks of becoming a memorable punk anthem. Check out these lyrics: "As far as I understand we had laws to rule this land / Now the current penalty a small slap and set them free / What goes around comes around / You'll see that in this town, legislation has its cost / Dealers smile and the war is lost / The punishment should fit the crime / The government should be doing time." Flip the EP over and you get HIGGINS++ doing a short spoken word intro and then going right into another really good contemporary English melodic punk chug. "Got Revolution" has the tasty guitar licks and the fine-tuned vocals with harmonies that make a song stick in your head for hours. The *New Day, New Enemy* EP is a good punk rock split EP! (BR)
(JSNTGM, PO Box 1026, Blackpool, FY30FA, ENGLAND)

SINKIN' SHIPS – "All Signs Are Wrong" CD

Wow! These guys have this powerful sound with a strong female lead vocalist. Well-honed tunes and ultra clean, crisp production should help these SINKIN' SHIPS get some serious attention from the industry fat cats. A quality release. (HM)
(Sink & Destroy, www.sinkinships.com)

SOLUTION / BASEMENT – split CD

Shit, a good CD! I was beginning to wonder if I would get one this month, but MCR rarely lets me down. This split CD is actually quite a departure, as it has no hardcore sounds on it. BASEMENT sounds like a cross between RANDY and WASTED. The SOLUTION has a similar feel but maybe adds a little bit more rock *a la* the HIVES or later era ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT into the mix. Good stuff by these two Japanese bands. (JF)
(MCR Company, 157 Kamaiagu Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, JAPAN, www.dance.ne.jp)

SONS OF CYRUS – "Monkey Business" CD

"Woooaaah Yeee-aah Babee-uh!" You got that? Scando longhairs get a comp of their NOMADSy, guitar solo-riffic, partytime 90s rock 'n' roll EPs and rarities, and the overall effect is a six-pack short of jaw dropping. I heard a few of these as they came out and the initial impression has stuck: kinda b-team bar band rock, with individual elements that could perhaps shine in a different context. This impression is borne out by a side project band of these guys, the LOCOMOTIONS, who've put out superior singles to this mob. I don't need this around, but I suspect I am in the definite minority and there should be sufficient crowds of tattoo victims to keep this CD in business. (RW)
(Dead Beat, www.dead-beat-records.com)

SONS OF CYRUS – "Rock 'n' Rollercoaster" CD

Ryan Wells and I always *appear* at the same vector coordinates, whether we want to or not (wearing the same shirt, pants and shoes to a party; buying the same paranoid 1970s science fiction paperback on the same day; crashing the same exclusive wine-and-cheese art event, you name it). When it comes to the SONS OF CYRUS we're of one mind, as well—me, I say it's dullsville schlock masquerading as *intense fuel-injected rock 'n' roll that'll raise the dead and slay the living (*or drive 'em to the bar for another round). (JH)
(Big Brothel, Box 6170, SE-102 33 Stockholm, SWEDEN, www.bigbrothel.tk)

THE SPACE COWBOYS – "Dead End Streets & Devil's Night" CD

Hell yes! This is definitely the best slab I got this month. These Swedes rock it hard! The SPACE COWBOYS glam-up a TURBONEGRO sound with flawless delivery and plenty of energy. Get it! (HM)
(Sonic Swirl, PO Box 111202, Cleveland, OH 44111, www.sonicswirlrecords.com)

STAJNAS LOBOS – "Suburban Avengers" CD

This was the surprise of the month for me. A shitty looking CD cover with some really cool punk rock tunes inside. This Swedish band has a real classic punk sound, which seems to be kind of a trend these days, I guess. Since I was weaned on this kind of shit, I'm predisposed to totally love it, and I do. One could say they sound a little like the OBSERVERS with the high-pitched vocals of VICE SQUAD and, on the awesome first track at least, the melodies of HARUM SCARUM. The track "They Live" pays tribute to the cult-classic film of the same name, and "Into My Heart" is so catchy it's hard to believe it's not a cover. Sweet! (PC)
(Lupa, c/o Rikard Johansson, Sågarg. 15, 11636 Stockholm, SWEDEN, www.stajnaslobos.com)

STALINGRAD –"Stalingrad" CD

This is a six-song disque from a group of mature punks from southern France lead by Thierry Tuborg of STALAG fame. The band plays a '77-style punk reminiscent of the STOOGES and RAMONES, although I found cut five sounded more like TELEVISION, or LES THUGS. The songs average just over three minutes each, but keep up the energy with some good guitar hooks and solid drumming. There was no lyric sheet included so I did not understand everything said, except one song is about older punks and another about six million enemies. Their CD definitely invokes the emotions of rebellion and resistance including the group's name Stalingrad, a famous World War Two battle where the Russian people defeated Hitler's Nazis. (HH)
(Julie Products, 4 Rue de L'imprimerie, 34070 Montpellier, FRANCE)

STILETTO – "Lovely and Lousy" CD

An all female grungy rock outfit—think a sludgier L7—with operatic vocals. No lyrics printed, though there are lots of pictures of the band, current and former. This is not my thing at all. (RK)
(www.stilletorocks.com)

STORMCROW – "Enslaved in Darkness" LP

Standing in the proud doom and gloom lineage of such crust progenitors as AMEBIX and MISERY, Oakland's STORMCROW takes the classic crust sound and infuses it with a not-so-healthy BOLT THROWER addiction, resulting in a massively heavy and oppressive five-song slab of misanthropy. The production on is this is great: heavy and raw, the whole sound is blown-out and distorted. The playing's not what I would call tight as a drum, but the looseness sort of adds to the ugly abrasiveness of the whole affair. The near-death-metal intensity of the vocals and guitars may turn off some punks, but this is definitely the kind of crust I dig, so check it out—it's certain to make yours a miserable fucking day. (EL)
(No Options, PO Box 22285, Oakland, CA 94623)

STREET BRATS – "See You at the Bottom" CD

These dudes are good! I loved their EP and this is just as great. Ultra catchy retro punk that's a mix of STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, the RAMONES, and a little power pop. Certainly one of the best new bands around, and they sound like they're just getting started with this hit-after-hit assault. One of the year's best. (RL)
(Full Breach Kicks, www.fullbreach77.com)

SWING DING AMIGOS – "Kings of Culo" LP

Holy shit! This record rocks. Take a dash of ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT, a dose of TOYS THAT KILL, a bit of high energy VICTIM'S FAMILY minus the funkiness, and then just add a child in need of Ritalin and you have the SWING DING AMIGOS. Fast, tight, and furious, this band is a meth head's wet dream. Even if you don't do speed I am sure you will find something to like about this record. If you can't find something you like on *Kings of Culo* I ain't gonna call you soulless, but you probably are no fun at a party. A definite top ten consideration LP, and I mean for my year-end list. (JF)
(Recess, PO Box 1666, San Pedro, CA 90733, www.recessrecords.com)

THE TEEN SENSATIONS / THE VENTS – split CD

This label has yet to put out a dud—home of the UNLOVABLES and the ERGS! The VENTS dish out some sweet power pop punk *a la* the DESCENDENTS and LAGWAGON. The TEEN SENSATION GLASSES have a rougher sound with keyboards in the mix. Traces of nerd pop punk here *a la* ol' Mutant Pop stuff. A strong split. (RL)
(Whoa Oh, www.whoaohrecords.com)

TRACTOR SEX FATALITY – "Peel and Eat" CD

I don't usually like bands with names like this (why should I answer to you?), but I'm enough of a man to admit that I'm not always *right. Peel and Eat* is big, graceless, utterly lacking in subtlety, and a mutant throwback to the halcyon days of AmRep noise bands, sour malt liquor, and abuse of over-the-counter cold medication. Noise is for heroes, leave the music for zeros. "A-Bomb," "Crime in the Bushes," "Skeleton Keys" and "Drumbrake" are the perfect analgesic: *metallic* (in a non-"heavy metal" sense, more like scrap iron in a clothes dryer), grimy, unconcerned with appearances. Good, as in *good bad good.* Thanks, TRACTORS! (JH)
(Dead Beat, PO Box 283, Los Angeles, CA 90078, www.dead-beat-records.com)

TROUBLE BOUND – "Here to the End" CD

RANCID comes to mind when listening to this CD, although TROUBLE BOUND has a more late-90s street punk sound rather than the ska-punk sounds of RANCID, both of which I hate. I would expect to hear something like this from a label like TKO or Hellcat, and it would no doubt be produced by Lars Fredriksen. The bass lines stand out, but the vocals are like a direct rip off of RANCID (aaagh), and actually I even hear some of the Al Barr (the BRUISERS) tough guy style mixed in with 'em. On some of the tracks they completely change it up with some Elvis and country ditties. One thing stands out to me when listening to this CD as well as a lot of what passes for punk rock these days, and that is that it doesn't sound dangerous, raw, dirty, or rebellious. The musicianship is undeniably good but lacking any kind of power or cut and is way too poppy. It's too bad that I have to give reviews like this when these folks obviously put a lot of time and effort into their music, but it comes down to the fact that as a reviewer it is my job to set some kind of a standard in my personal musical tastes, so that people will know where I am coming from whether I hate a record or recommend it as a classic. (WK)
(Hangmen, www.hangmenrecords.com)

UPTOWN CREEPERS – "What They Want" CDEP

Other than the horns, this isn't really ska. The seven tracks showcase seven snotty, speedy punk tunes, with horns, and the very occasional ska-beat. A lot more AGAINST ALL AUTHORITY than MUSTARD PLUG for sure. I still don't like it too much, but there you go. (RK)
(Skarnival Music, www.skarnival.com)

WACO FUCK – "Mind Control" EP

Surly, fast, blast beat hardcore that kind of reminds me of KILLED IN ACTION mixed with CAPITALIST CASUALTIES. The tunes here are all pretty basic, but have an aggressive edge that kept me focused throughout all six songs. Solid! (RC)
(Mind Control, 2588 El Camino Real, F-335, Carlsbad, CA 92008)

WATCHMAKER – "Erased from the Memory of Man" CD

First of all, how great is the song title "Nuked to Ashes"? I don't think these guys ever once stop screaming throughout this entire onslaught of a record. It's just a constant barrage of shifting noise and aural violence. Half of the songs completely lack any sort of structure, the rest is a caustic feedback-drenched bastard mix of grind and black metal. This is extreme anti-music here, maybe like taking just the noise parts off the first EYEHATEGOD album and speeding them up in an (even more) nihilistic black metal context. Raw production, raw playing, and overwhelming intensity throughout result in an exaltation of all things negative and hate-ridden that draws almost no comparison. (EL)
(Willowtip, www.willowtip.com)

WEAVING THE DEATHBAG – "Compendium: The First Four 7" Records" CD

A melodious and somewhat heartfelt journey through several years worth of WEAVING THE DEATHBAG 7"s. WTD plays decent fast-paced hardcore with a noodly, but not horribly wanky sound—think later RKL or TOXIC REASONS, but with a looser grip on the reigns—and good, solid vocals that sound at times a bit like good ol' Nick Blinko. The lyrics are decent, but occasionally they are a little too meek and apologetic for my taste. Take this lyrical excerpt: "Terror alerts are bullshit. I don't mean to swear…." Well fuck me, I should be sure to not fucking swear when I describe your bullshit sound then! That's a joke!! Look for more good things to cum (he-he, naughty word…) from these good, clean young Midwestern boys. Good stuff. (BS)
(Hungry Ghost, PO Box 620241, Middleton, WI 53562, www.weavingthedeathbag.com)

THE WEDNESDAYS – "Invisible Youth" LP

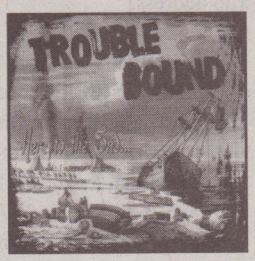
A raw-ish release from this band that mixes melodic punk with roots and some spastic outbursts. This reminds me of early 90s bands like NUISANCE and JON SPENCER BLUES EXPLOSION. Decent enough, with a lot of energy. (RL)
(Arkam, 1925 Hwy. 69 South, Savanah, TN 38372)

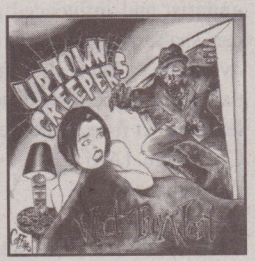
WESTERN ADDICTION – "Cognicide" CD

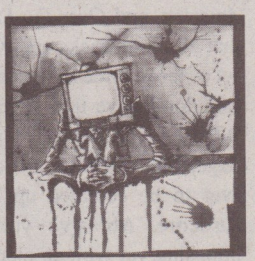
Angry and fast punk rock from San Francisco. Born out of the frustration of everyday life workin' for the man, "the man" in this case being Fat Mike. (AD)
(Fat Wreck)

WHISKEY DIARIES – "Hangman" CD

Wow, dude...metal...This started off pretty hard rock and I was just reaching for the eject button when it started to







settle down a little, cut its hair, and put its man pants back on again. Though they could definitely do with a little less rock and more punk in their punk rock, this isn't bad nonetheless and at times reminded me a little of MURDER CITY DEVILS and even D.I. (AD)
(Hell City)

THE WIPERS – "Over the Edge" LP

Portland's WIPERS made their strongest statement with this LP, which captures the WIPERS' sound at its hardest and most refined. There are times when the songs seem to be uniform in their tempo (medium-fast), but there's a riveting, almost hypnotic texture to the guitar riffing that makes standouts like "Messenger," "What Is," and the classic "No Generation Gap" unusually powerful even on repeated listening. This may be Greg Sage's best moment on vinyl, and you'd be mistaken not to give it a spin. Recommended. (SS)
(no address)

THE WIPERS – "Over the Edge" LP

Another WIPERS boot. This one seems to be of good quality in the pressing/mastering department, although the cover scans could have been better. The WIPERS got their start in Portland, Oregon, in 1978 or thereabouts, and produced some of the most anthemic, atmospheric, and catchy punk rock ever. Founding member and mainstay Greg Sage is an amazing guitarist and influenced more people than you can shake a stick at. This band should not be overlooked. Their first three records are essential, and can be picked up on CD in a convenient box set from Zeno Records, the label run by Greg Sage. (AM)
(no address)

THE WIPERS – "Rebels With a Cause" LP

This is a fairly well-done boot LP of demos and outtakes from *Is This Real*, *Youth of America*, and *Over the Edge*. Someone told me that all these tracks are available on the CD box set of those three LPs, something I can't confirm as I don't have that set, although I do love the WIPERS. The baby of guitarist/vocalist Greg Sage, the WIPERS are one of the best bands ever to be coughed up by American punk or hardcore. Abrasive yet melodic, dark, and imposing yet with an element of pop catchiness in every track, they always made me think of a JOY DIVISION raised on surf music. The tracks on this boot are great versions, but I'd recommend just picking up that CD box set—then the money goes straight to Sage himself. (AM)
(no address)

WALK THE PLANK – CD

It seems that American sounding hardcore is really taking off in Europe and the UK these days with bands like WALK THE PLANK, DEADSTOP, the NOW DENIAL, and many others. This CD contains EP and demo recordings and some video footage to boot; sorry I couldn't view it because my computer doesn't have a QuickTime player. WALK THE PLANK's sound consists of mid-tempo hardcore with some really brutal and pissed-sounding vocals and that is pretty much it. I would maybe compare them to KNIFE FIGHT vocally, or maybe NEGATIVE APPROACH, but of course not as good. The songs all have funny pirate titles like "Lost at Sea" and "Sea Sick," but most seem to have little to do with the pirate theme other than that, and seem more interpersonal. I wish I could see the video footage, from the pictures in the booklet it look like the shows might be cool to see. (WK)
(Dead and Gone, www.deadandgone.co.uk)

WIRES ON FIRE – "Homewrecker" CD

Homewrecker launches with not entirely as eerie as it hopes to be CRIME & THE CITY SOLUTION style lurching, triple-filtered into an indigestible sterile blather; it quickly evaporates into vapid and confused (urhh… I mean edgy and experimental…) rock music that fully loses me. "Consciously Unconscious" and "Hate that Breeds Love" both remind me a little of LOVE LIFE or GET HUSTLE, but the sheer LA-ness of the WIRES ON FIRE recording make it hard to see any glimmer of what this band may be capable of in the future. (BS)
(BuddyHead, PO Box 1268, Hollywood CA, 90078, www.buddyhead.com)

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH FACES – CD

This band is a trip. Being from Idaho and looking like extras on *Dawson's Creek*, they sure dish out some cool sloppy punk. Dangerhouse all the way with the singing of a gutter existence. Three gals and a guy. Cheapo production in tribute to X, the AVENGERS, and the BAGS. I only hope they break up before they make their Combat Rock. (RL)
(PO Box 1941, Ketchum, ID 83340, stickoutyourcan@hotmail.com)

YOUNG PLAYTHINGS – "Pick Up With…" CD

Another new Southern California take on old skinny-tie power pop. They (thankfully) avoid the "EXPLODING HEARTS clone" badge, which automatically brings this a huge notch above most of their new power pop peers. By having one foot firmly planted in the garage, most notably with their slightly overused organ grinding, they've managed to give their sugar-sweet hooks a rougher taste. The YOUNG PLAYTHINGS throw a whole lotta hooks and looks your way, but as is so often the case, it's just hard to tell which they put more effort into. (MC)
(Dionysus, PO Box 1975, Burbank, CA 91507)

V/A – "A Secret Recipe from the Far East" CD

A great comp of Japanese bands cranking out the new wave, punk rock, and garage punk. Two songs each by PSYCHOTIC REACTION, PRAMBATH, NYLON, DON FLAMES, the NAILCLIPPERS, and TEENAGE CONFIDENTIAL. Too ripping to discriminate on who to list here. (RL)
(Nice & Neat, PO Box 14177, Minneapolis, MN 55414, www.niceandneatrecords.com)

V/A – "Bring It" CD

This is a four-band comp/sampler featuring the Northwest rock bands MURDOCK, BEAUTIFUL MOTHERS, JACKMOVE, and BUCKWILDZ. MURDOCK rock some blazing metalish IRON MAIDEN-like jams. BEAUTIFUL MOTHERS hit some repetitive hard grooves with their hard rock. JACKMOVE crank up the power chords and sound a bit like TURBONEGRO. BUCKWILDZ are more like ZEKE. Now that's some mutha fuckin' *rawk*! (HM)
(Hand Panther, www.handpanther.r8.com)

V/A – "Ceól Gáidhlig Mar Sgian Nad Amhaich!" EP

This is an all-Gaelic compilation EP, I can only judge from the presence of OI POLLOI and ATOMGEVITTER (bands that I know of) that this is some incendiary political punk intended to raise awareness of the destruction of culture and an almost lost language. At first I didn't like the OI POLLOI song that much—and being a band I really like and know well, they would be a clincher for this record—but I have to say it really grew on me. Not a *Unite and Win* classic, but really good nonetheless; in a bit of a different direction, yet still quite OI POLLOI. Next up is MILL A H-UILE RUD, who plays some really poppy punk that reminds me of a lot of bands in San Francisco's Mission District that used to play the BART shows or at Mission Records. I've never been a big fan of whiny vocals and happy songs, but if that is your thing, here you go. ATOMGEVITTER plays some raw screamy hardcore which is appealing in its sheer speed and dirge. I'm sure they would be fun to see live. Last is NAD AISLINGEAN who plays dance music of all things. I don't like it, and the only thing I can say about them is that the vocalist has a good voice—I would love to hear her sing for a punk band. (WK)
($4 ppd: Problem?, Pillars, Strathmiglo Rd, Falkland, Fife, KY15 7AD, Alba, SCOTLAND, www.problemrecords.tk)

V/A – "Dirty Faces Vol 1 1/2" CD

Three EPs from the Dirty Faces label on one

convenient (read: disposable) CD. It starts off with a horrible faux-reggae track, then proceeds to a terrible, "funny" German marching song. After that shite, the generic street punk of THE REVOLVERS and PUNX ARMY sounds downright brilliant. Fortunately, the disc gets better, with four tracks of garagey punk rock from CREEKS, and finally, four (literally) screamin' tracks from Switzerland's all-female KAMIKATZE. (PC)
(www.dirtyfaces.de)

V/A – "Diggy Diggy Dead" 2xCD

This is a 33-track, two-CD comp of bands from Texas and the world. The styles go from noise to country-ish to punk. Highlights include the DICKS, DEAD SEXY, DENNIS MOST & THE INSTIGATORS, the DEADITES, GOGGLE-A, GALACTIC INMATE, and CHUPACABRA JR. A decent comp, all in all. (HM)
(Rubble, www.rubblerecords.com)

V/A – "Four Scenes One Family" CD

Three tracks each from four new, solid '87 HC revival-style hardcore bands from disparate points across the US. Boston's COLIN OF ARABIA spews basic, caustic SICK OF IT ALL-style HC along with an ill-conceived, "brutal" MISFITS cover ("Skulls") and a downbeat but decent cover of BLACK FLAG's "Nervous Breakdown." California's BLOOD STAND STILL plays proficient and solid, speeding chunka-chunka *a la* KILLING TIME, complete with the requisite breakdowns. New Jersey's IN SEARCH OF continues on the same beatdown style, going heavier with breakdowns between charging hardcore. Their recording is refreshingly lo-fi for this style, which makes it sound way tougher. STOP THIS FALL channels a more direct, clear vocaled, and upbeat GORILLA BISCUITS-style attack. A solid sampler of developing bands, unfortunately the packaging pins this more as a press release or advertisement than a "from the kids, for the kids" old school compilation. There are no photos beyond caged band press photo shots and no lyrics, just shades of a publicist-styled written descriptions of each band. Toss the booklet, rock the CD. (KS)
(Scorpion, www.scorpionrecords.com)

V/A – "Lambination" CD

Bringing together bands from all over the world (mostly Western Europe), this 18-track compilation is far above average. Yeah, average *is* pretty low these days, and with styles on this CD ranging from straight-ahead 80s hardcore to Fat Records style punk to oi, there are definitely some winners and some losers. Reminding me a lot of NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS, Hungary's SEMMI KOMOLY is one of the winners, delivering fast, driving hardcore with strong guitar leads and melodic vocals on their track "Naprol Napra." DOGSHIT SANDWICH's "Tracksuit Clon" is a fun one too. I won't go into the losers, but there is some wretched SAVES THE DAY-ish emo/pop towards the end of the disc. Dead Lamb Records could use some help when it comes to art/layout, but it's a refreshing change from the endless assault of professional looking CDs that go straight to the dump. Worth checking out! (VH)
(Dead Lamb, www.deadlambrecords.com)

V/A – "No New York" LP

When people speak of "No Wave," this volume is that of which they speak. Brian Eno recorded the equivalent of four EPs by four New York City bands: the CONTORTIONS, MARS, DNA, and TEENAGE JESUS & THE JERKS. It was released on a major label in 1978 and defined the East Coast hyper-intellectual, aggressively arty reaction to lumpen punk rock 'n' roll—sort of an anti-DICKIES, or anti-PLASMATICS, or what have you. These groups mined Endtimes rhetoric steeped in toxic levels of nihilism and married it to a totally stripped down sonic assault that used repetition and guitar squalor to get over their varied anti-everything philosophies. Very decadent, uber-hip, and subsequently horribly overplayed in the 80s by bands with far weaker takes on these general themes of personal apocalypse. The tunes are powerfully played; their impulses may have been bleak, but the blood flowing through these tracks is very much alive. This compilation affords you direct access to what fucked-up downtown-based NYC perverts were obsessed with in 1978, and while they never seemed to want to acknowledge actually enjoying their own music, don't let that stop you from "digging" their violently necrotic self-absorption. Comes with burnt spoon and small plastic baggie, needles not included. (RW)
(Lillith Ltd., Russia [?])

V/A – "Old Skars & Upstarts 505" CD

The latest collection from Duane Peters. This time around we have the likes of the BRIEFS, the STITCHES, TURBONEGRO, the ADICTS, EPOXIES, and so on. A mighty impressive lineup indeed on this keeper. (RL)
(Disaster, www.disasterecords.com)

V/A – "Protect" CD

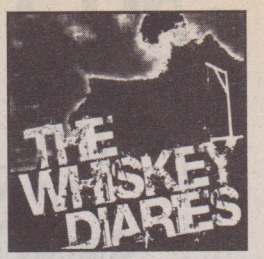
For starters, the cause: a benefit for the National Association to Protect Children. Amongst the mentionables we have NOFX, the FALCON, SOVIETTES, the ERGS!, AGAINST ME, and TEENAGE BOTTLE ROCKETS. OK. (RL)
(Fat Wreck)

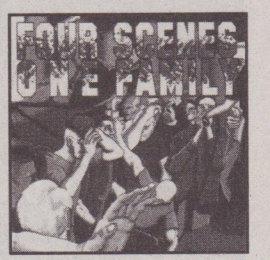
V/A – "The Ugly Truth About Blackpool, Vol. 1" CD

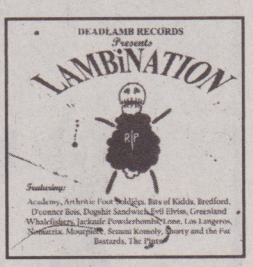
A comp of punk from old stuff like ONE WAY SYSTEM, ZYKLON B, the FITS and MALE MODELS, to more recent stuff like PHANTOM CREEPS, KING MOB ECHO, and RAZOR DOG. Maybe I shouldn't mention that SKREWDRIVER's "Anti-Social" is on this, but it is. I know, I know, it was before their white supremacist days, so it's cool. With no notes about this except the Blackpool reference, I guess it's for your listening enjoyment. (RL)
(JSNTGM Music)

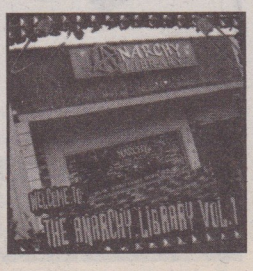
V/A – "Welcome to the Anarchy Library, Vol. 1" CD

This is a comp of bands that have played the club called the Anarchy Library down in SoCal. The comp starts off with "Lights Out" by the ANGRY SAMOANS, and blasts through tunes by the BRIEFS, the ADICTS, CHINA WHITE, BOUNCING SOULS, CH3 and D.I. Some real classics. 29 tracks in all. (HM)
(Gale Force, www.galeforce-records.com)









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DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: Erin Yanke, PO Box 1113, Portland, OR 97207. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Peter Avery, Ariel Awesome, and Erin Yanke.

AFTERBIRTH plays crust that is mid-tempo for hardcore, and mid-range on the metallic influences scale. The vocals are shouted with palpable anger; this band's also got good back up vocals. They do an AXEGRINDER cover, and that fact will probably tell you more about where this bands stands than my adjectives. (8 song Cassette, lyrics included. Insane Society Records, PO Box 18, 504 01 Novy Bydzov, Czech Republic.) (Erin)

BLOOD SPIT NIGHTS had their vinyl releases compiled onto this cassette with one bonus song. They're raw and fast punk rock, straightforward and no-nonsense. The vocals, though, add most of the texture to the songs, and are at times amazing. They sound like they,re coming at you from more than one direction, and use tones on the "punk rock yelling scale" that aren't normally heard. And, it's always funny to get recordings from Portland bands from the Czech Republic. ($6 US ppd. world, 4 Euro ppd. Europe. 20 song Cassette, lyrics included. Gas Mask Records, PO Box 107, Nadrazni 23, 591 01 Zdar Nad Sazavou, Czech Republic.) (Erin)

BLOWN TO BITS gives us a compilation tape of their past, with seven songs from a split LP, and eight songs from their first two EPs. Metal riffs and hardcore rhythm and pace, with a screaming vocalist who slows down a bit to impersonate one residing in hell—you probably know what you're getting from these guys. If you don't this is a great place to start. (15 song Cassette, lyrics included. Insane Society Records, PO Box 18, 504 01 Novy Bydzov, Czech Republic.) (Erin)

BUZZTONE plays poppy "melodic hardcore" that sounds much like the MTV pop punk that was popular three or four years ago. The fairly catchy, up-tempo songs are filled with hooks and have just a hint of aggression. Musically, the songs are about half DISCOUNT and half early Fat Wreck Chords. The lead vocals are mostly sung while the back-ups harmonize at some times and scream at others. The songs are well written and the recording is great, so if you can still stand to listen to this kind of music then you'll probably like it. (5 song CD, no lyrics, nowhere to hang their hat, www.buzztone.org) (Pete)

THE CULT CLASSICS have all these lyrics, but you can't understand a single word in their garbly, raging, screamy vocals. Not one! Remarkable. They fall vaguely into the crust punk genre, but not easily. Two bands that come to mind as similar are GRIMPLE and NEGATIVE APPROACH (kind of). Not bad, a little funny at times. But a good effort. (5 song CD, lyrics included. www.thecultclassics.tk, 8 Danube Court, Roistorstown, MD 21136) (Ariel)

DIBUK runs through six grindcore songs in under five minutes. One second they're moving through power chords as fast as they can and the next they are in a slow, metal influenced breakdown. As you might expect, the vocal duties are split between the frantic high-pitched screamer (who really gets most of the action) and the low growler. The songs are a bit messy but the total sound is pretty good. (6 song CD, no lyrics. 3324 E. 14th St., Los Angeles, CA 90023) (Pete)

FESTA DESPERATO plays dark, galloping hardcore that includes tinges of metal but only in the guitar—so many notes, and so damn fast, you know? The rhythm section is fucking powerful, and the vocals are straight up yelling—deep-voiced and threatening yelling. It works perfectly. (10 song Cassette, lyrics included. Gas Mask Records, PO Box 107, Nadrazni 23, 591 01 Zdar Nad Sazavou, Czech Republic.) (Erin)

FleshWave#1 is a Detroit Hardcore comp featuring DEATH IN CUSTODY (hardcore with hard rock musical sensibilities, fast and angry), THE BILL BONDSMEN (classic Midwest hardcore, strong songs with weird little bits thrown in to keep it interesting; the vocals are shouted and drawn out, but never singing), GODDAMN (more effects going on here while they play a mix of hardcore and grindcore), PUBLIFE (specializing in the tough guy hardcore sounds, or maybe that's just the lyrics, which are FEAR-influenced. Slower and more group vocals happening than anywhere else on the CD), and I ACCUSE! (The CD was breaking up here, but the songs are short simple and shred.) ($3 ppd. 10 song CD, no lyrics included. 21620 Hoffman, St. Clair Shores, MI 48082.) (Erin)

FREE RADICAL plays sloppy, mid-tempo punk tunes. The sound is part BLACK FLAG and part BLATZ. They play basic three-chord songs that have just enough hooks and guitar leads to make it interesting while the snotty vocals are sung with an abrasive edge. The songs sound a bit dull at first but they grow on you in a sort of nostalgic way after a couple of listens. (6 song CD, with lyrics. PO Box 233, N. San Juan, CA 95960, www.freeradicalband.com) (Pete)

As you may know, **FUCKED UP** plays ruthless and raw hardcore punk that often prompts bouts of sing-a-longs and raging circle pits (sometimes people are even hit over the face with strollers). If you are already a fan of Fucked Up, or if they sound like your new favorite, you may want to check out this "mixtape" they have released. It contains demo songs, live tracks, throwaway tracks, funny stage banter, and the originals to their covers (UNDERTONES and YOUNGHEARTS). I guess it truly is a mixtape. I enjoyed listening to it, I was thoroughly entertained, but it's not really something I'd listen to again. (36 song cassette, lyrics included. 1166 Chaster Road, Gibsons, BC VON1V4, CANADA) (Ariel)

GENTLE VEINCUT falls into the categories of noise rock, post-punk, post-hardcore, and art punk, of which I can only really site SONIC YOUTH and MONORCHID as similar in sound. The guitars are fast and anxious and the drums are steady and almost mechanical sounding. It was pretty rockin', but repetitive to the point of tedium. (9 song CD, lyrics included. kontakt@gentle-veincut.de) (Ariel)

GOUKA PROGRAM has a one-song demo. It's a short, driving hardcore tune, filled with energy and aggression. Structurally, it's not too amazing, as I think I can break it down into verse, chorus, verse, chorus, verse (with guitar wanking), chorus, verse, chorus. The song is really driven by the bass and drums, which pack a lot of power, and then it is filled with heavily distorted power chords and strong lead parts. The vocalist really belts it out with incoherent screaming on the verses and weird MEN'S RECOVERY PROJECT-style talking on the chorus. I really wouldn't mind hearing more of this band. (1 song CD, no lyrics. PO Box 436, Waldo, FL 32694) (Pete)

GUNS AND ROSA PARKS wins the "free association Olympics" with that stunning and topical name. They play short fast angry distorted snotty "street" punk. In a strange way they sound like a toughened and un-silly FYP. A not bad Negative Approach cover, and the lyrics "you're not stabbing anybody you fucking internet dork" win my recommendation. (7 song CD, lyrics included. www.gnrp.org, 906 Camelot Ct. Fort Collins, CO 80525) (Ariel)

LÍNEAS ALBLÉS has two hardcore songs on their demo CD. The first song is a catchy, upbeat tune with clever bass lines, a couple of hooks, and a lot of muted guitar. The second song is scorcher that breaks out the blast beats and quick power chord riffs, and then mixes it with catchy breakdowns. Both songs are good ones but the recording feels like it is restrained. The songs lack the energy and aggression that they feel like they should have. The vocalist does scream, the guitars do buzz and the drums do pound but the dynamic changes are missing. (2 song CD, no lyrics. La Idea, Apdo. 18251, 2080 Madrid, Spain, www.ciclorecords.com) (Pete)

THE REMEDY plays melodic songs. Some are catchy, some are slow and dreamy, and some just sort of ride the middle. The female vocalist reminds me of the PINKOS lady when she's not pissed, and the male vocals are like the couple of PRIMITIVES songs where the guy sang. It's not ragin' with energy, but it sounds good. (8 song CD, no lyrics included. Roeschibachstrasse 59-037 Zurich, Switzerland) (Erin)

ROT is all about the grind core. Textbook definition, although the songs sometimes approach a minute long, gotta watch that. This has dual vocals performing sounds of evil, backed by non-stop guitar and a drummer who hits hard, double basses it up occasionally, and keeps it all moving. These tracks are from a bunch of different records, which are listed in the cassette cover if you want to be a complete-ist. (28 song Cassette, lyrics and translation included. Insane Society Records, PO Box 18, 504 01 Novy Bydzov, Czech Republic.) (Erin)

SCAPEGOAT plays slow-paced metal that's got grindcore kicking in like an occasional schizophrenic episode. Vocals are standard "see you in hell" (the sentiment, not the band) shouting. The headbangers will love this. (9 song Cassette, lyrics included. 15 Locust Rd, Ipswich, MA 01938.) (Erin)

SUBRAMANIUM has a pretty basic and slow yet rocking musical base that left me prepared for any vocal style except the dueling grind guys. Woah! The second song, and from there on out it's not as surprising, especially when they kick into epic metal moments. They are slow and complex with that pounding metal beat, occasional "pretty" moments, and the duel that never ends between the vocalists. ($2 ppd. 5 song CD, no lyrics included. 37 McDade St, Asheville, NC 28806.) (Erin)

TENSIONWIRE is the project of one dude, Frank Ciampi, in which he plays all of the instruments with some varied assistance from other Chicago punks. Sounds like 7 SECONDS, VINDICTIVES, and CLAYWHEELS in a whirlwind hurricane blender. I believe Frank Ciampi was even the drummer for the VINDICTIVES. It's got some good hooks, and a bad attitude. What more do you want from Chicago pop punk? (12 song CD, lyrics included. Tensionwire@hotmail.com) (Ariel)

If you've been wondering whatever happened to deeply political northwest straight edge vegan hardcore then **THIS TIME TOMORROW** is for you. Fairly typical hardcore fare, a TRIAL comparison might be giving them too much. But the guitars are heavy, the breakdowns are brutal, and the vocals are fierce. Hail Seitan! (4 song CD, lyrics included. thistime_tomorrow@hotmail.com) (Ariel)

TOTALLY FUCKING GAY has no real instruments, but is a collage of keyboards, samplers, drum machines, and vocals. The songs unfortunately start to sound the same real quick. They're even sung with the same tricked out voice and cadence, whether the songs are about fucking men in uniform, Justin Timberlake, an orgy with the Village People, or how icky girls are. (8 song CD, lyrics included. 36 Central Park Rd, Plainview, NY 11803.) (Erin)

WASTELAND has a four-song demo, which is the same four songs that came on their split CD with NO TRIGGER that I reviewed several months ago. Just to recap, they play emotional hardcore songs that are fast, screamy, and pretty catchy. There isn't much screwing around with the songs as each one breaks out at full speed with heavy drumming and thick guitars and they even manage to maintain their drive through the breakdowns. If you didn't check this out earlier, maybe now is the time. (4 song CD, with lyrics. 9 Gardner St., Oxford, MA 01540) (Pete)

WITCHES WITH DICKS is a weird name for a pretty regular punk band. Steeped heavily in East Bay punk sensibilities, but with their own distinct flavor, they play tight catchy as fuck songs about innocuous subjects. They got it down: distorted guitars, tight drumming, and gruff yet reflective vocals. Good job. (4 song CD, lyrics included. jeff@skitsystem.net, 28 Haskell Street #1, Allston, MA 02134) (Ariel)

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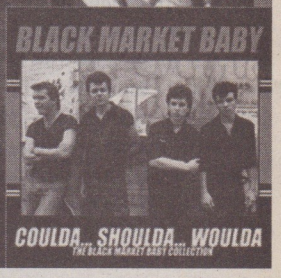

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ZINES

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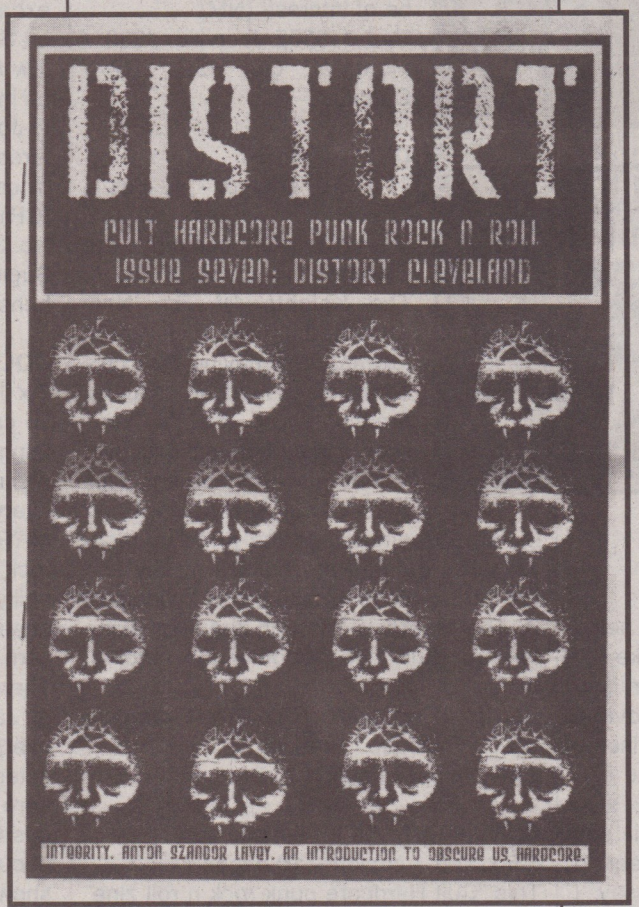
Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

BEAT MOTEL #3 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 38 pgs.
Here's another issue of *Beat Motel*. This issue has a straight edge theme but sticks with its normal columns/reviews/rants type of format. Read this issue for an interview with Anti-Flag, tips on how to play bass, a history of Queens of the Stone Age, and more. (CH)
71 Rectory Rd. / Ipswich, Suffolk / IP2 8EQ / England

BLACKPOOL ROX II #8 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 18 pgs
This is pretty cool—it comes with a free CD of Blackpool punk bands from the darkest days of '77 'til now, and the zine is pretty much an extended track listing/background reference into all of the bands on the CD. There are some more general music and book reviews too, but I really liked the local feel of the Blackpool-related matter. I like how all the bands feed into each other, and all the incidental information about punk graffiti and who got banned by the Blackpool council. In case you don't know, Blackpool is a Northern English seaside town; it's like if you took all the hippies and good vibrations out of Santa Cruz and replaced them with grumpy old English people and angry holiday makers. It's so rad there was and is such a vibrant punk and underground scene there. (LG)
www.jsntgm.com

BLAH-BLAH-BLOOD #2 / $?
6 x 8 – copied – 60 pgs
I can't imagine there's a better English-language zine covering Russia and its former satellites. It was two years in the making, so some of it could be outdated, but still, I was really impressed. Some of the material is translated from other sources, like the interviews with Leningrad's Brigadniy Podryad (who started in '86) and Latvia's Dilönis ('90-'94). Also, there are long talks with Wheel of Dharma (since 2000 from Finland; they started as the straight edge band Koleso Dharmy outside of Volgograd in '93) and the Poland-based Jason Flower, who's been in many Canadian bands and now does an archival label, plus a shorter one with a woman who books shows and plays in bands (inc. Marschak) in Moscow. Hero Dishonest contributes two tour diaries from Russia and Belarus. There are two political articles, one a very informative history of the conflict in Chechnya, and the other a kind of dry report on shitty Russian political parties who are considered "left" by the mainstream media. There are reviews, mostly from the ex-USSR and the US, including zines from Irkutsk, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. The layout is simple but nice, with plenty of photographs, and overall the quality of content is pretty good. Plus you can read it on the Internet. Props to Szarapow for putting this together. (JM)
Dmitrij Ivanov / PO Box 30 / St. Petersberg-9 / 195009 / Russia
www.szss.tk



BOX CUTTER #10 / $1
5.0 x 4.5 – copied – 24 pgs
I'm surprised that this is already the tenth issue. I feel like I just reviewed the first one. The theme of this issue is bodies and the stories run the gamut from getting a vasectomy, stripping in Portland, veganism, casual sex, and a critical look at the aftermath of Katrina. The writing is pretty good and the subjects are well covered. It might be nice to see them go into a little more depth though. (CR)
Tomas / 1636 Fairview St. / Berkeley, CA 94703

CHANIMAL PLANET # 1, 2, 3 / $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied
As is indicated on the cover, this is a personal fanzine, which is sure to make some groan and others jump for joy. Heavy on text, light on layout this is a slice of life, stream of consciousness endeavor covering topics all over the map, but of a mostly introspective, analytical bent. Dammit.

The writing is good and engaging, not totally egocentric and self-absorbed, but more searching and trying to connect with people.(BD)
220 6th St / S. Moorhead, MN 56560

CHUMPIRE #183 / stamp or trade
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 12 pgs
I think I've accused this zine of not being personal enough in the past. Like all issues, this has the standard short listings/descriptions of records, movies, shows, zines, and events. This issue, however, also features a story of the editor's first venture in the world of sex with women (as well as reflections on his sex life in general), written in an endearing and humorous manner. I have to say, I enjoyed it much more than the zine and show reviews! (MD)
PO Box 27 / Annville, PA 17093-0027
chumpire@gmail.com

CITIZINE #9 / $3.25
8.5 x 11 – printed – 50 pgs
Punk news, DVD show and zine reviews, and a piece on the RFK assassination all in a straight-forward style make this L.A. publication worth getting your hands on. If you're a die-hard X fan (the L.A. "X", that is), the exhaustive Billy Zoom interview will make it a must have. (AS)
2513 W. 4th St. / Los Angeles, CA 90057
citizine@citizine.net

DEGENERATION OVERDRIVE Vol. 1 #2 / $2 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 40 pages
Very rock 'n' roll punk oriented zine here from Canada, with stuff like Adam West, Demons, Million Dollar Marxists, Nitwitz, Last Vegas, and Merle Allin (ugh). Plus reviews, crossword puzzles, etc. Well done with a slick computer layout. The music just isn't my scene, but for those into rock n roll garage type stuff this would definitely be of interest! (NM)
Carl / 5505 Iberville #236 / Montreal, QC H2G 2B2 / Canada

DIG IT #35 / $6
11 x 8 – printed – 48 pgs – French
Yeah, Christian rock made the cover of this issue of *Dig It*. The Knights Of The New Crusade continue their march forward, now having their crusade discussed in secular France, which, by the way, seems to be burning in its own hell at this very moment. This issue covers Texas Teri, Dead Moon, Dirtbombs, and the primitive festival. Also featured are articles on Sly and the Family Stone, Shake Some Action part 2, The Heard It Through the Grapevine column, plus loads of other fun reading. (HH)
Dig It c/o Armadillo / 32 Rue Pharaon / 31000 Toulouse / France
www.digitfanzine@chez.com

DISTORT #7 / $5 for 5-issue sub
8.5 x 11.5 – copied – 10 pages
This "Cult Hardcore punk rock n roll zine" from Oz definitely lives up to its name! This issue is dedicated to Cleveland HC, with a bunch of stuff on Integrity, who I dig a lot (with discussion of their lyrics), also some stuff on "obscure" USHC like Septic Death, White Cross, YDI, NOTA, United Mutation, etc. Cool stuff—you can tell the author loves this stuff. There's also stuff on Anton Lavey and the Church of Satan, whose ideology sucks in my opinion (self centeredness, social Darwinism, ad nauseam), but it is cool to see some spirituality/magick related stuff in a HC zine. A very strange column on how to kill people, as well…hmm. This zine also comes with a 7" by the band Straightjacket, who I believe were reviewed in the last issue of *MRR*. (NM)
Straightjacket / PO Box 239 / North Carlton, Vic 3054 / Australia

DOLL #211 / $?
10 x 7 – printed – 140 pgs – Japanese
Due to some odd goings-on at *Maximum*'s central headquarters, this older issue of *Doll* fell through the cracks. It's a good thing it re-emerged because this is a pretty great issue. As you know, *Doll* is in Japanese, and as you probably suspect, I can't read a word of Japanese. But I can tell you that this issue has a huge section on 60s US garage punk, including an exhaustive discography. Another section on Swedish punk, translated reprints of a few *Maximum* interviews, tons of reviews, an interview with The Strummers, a tribute to Joe Strummer, and a lot more. The pictures and quality make a treat to look at, since I'm too dumb to be able to read it. (CR)
No. 303 Aota Bldg. / 3-1-9, Kita / Kohenji / Suginami-Ku Tokyo / Japan
hensyu@doll-mag.co.jp

DOLL #220 / $?
7 x 10 – printed – 114 pages – Japanese
To call *Doll* the Japanese *MRR* is something I hear a lot but I don't think its too accurate, mainly because *Doll* covers everything from the DIY punk/HC that *MRR* is known for, but it also covers indie rock, what we may call "alternative," rockabilly, and so forth, which is mercilessly absent from the pages of our beloved concern. Having said that, *Doll* fuckin' rules. There is more than enough info for any fan of Japanese punk, HC, etc., to salivate over, even if they can't understand a character of the language. There is so much here that is totally worthwhile despite that: ads for releases I haven't heard anything about, pictures of bands I love, interviews, show reports, etc. This issue has a special report on early Australian punk, also Soulcraft(!), Toy Dolls, Terror, Show reports, Boris, Gamy, Last One Standing, Freaks, Griffin, a tribute to Biscuit, etc. Now I just have to figure out how to subscribe. (NM)
No. 303 Aota Bldg. / 3-1-9, Kita / Kohenji / Suginami-Ku Tokyo /Japan
hensyu@doll-mag.co.jp

EMERGENCY #5 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 54 pgs
This zine reads like a book—the kind that

lets itself linger in your head for a few days and leaves its taste on your tongue. Ammi writes about all the different types of people around her and the homes they create for and between themselves. She writes about life and the frantic way it is lived. (CH)
831 Elysian Fields / PO Box 259 / New Orleans, LA / 70117

EQUALIZING DISTORT Vol. 5 # 3 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 22 pgs
This is a zine accompanying a radio show on CIUT FM in Canada. There's an interview with Saigon Distress Signal, and one with a reformed the Freeze that covers a lot of old Boston scene stuff, which I kind of nerded out on. That's one of the best eras of American hardcore punk fullstop. Another interview with the "punk Bukowski" Chris Walter and a report on one of those "street punks out of retirement" fests. The rest is usual zine filler, reviews, scene news and so on. (LG)
91 St George St. / Toronto, ON M5S 2E8 / Canada
equalizingXdistort@cuit.fm

HERE BE DRAGONS #9 / $2
7 x 8.5 – copied – 44 pgs
As someone over 30 who resides on the periphery of the punk scene, I'm always interested in zines devoted to being an elderly punk rocker. What I really liked about this zine: the focus on the happenings in the Pittsburgh scene, an interview with local punk librarians (yeah!) and writings on making big decisions, like what the hell you're going to do with your life, going back to school and staying in touch with your ideals and trying to do something good for yourself and others. What I didn't like: there was this tone of defensiveness and privilege that pervaded this. The editors have made some major life choices (marriage and home ownership, namely) that don't necessarily fit in with everyone's idea of what is politically correct or punk. For me, their decisions to get married, etc are their own. But the weak attempts to justify it are just kind of…pathetic. For example, defending marriage even though it's a creation of church and state by comparing it to the fact that most of us don't murder others (as if ethics that coincide with Christian morals are somehow endorsing them?). There were some other examples that just made the editors look a bit wishy-washy—such as not confronting racist neighbors in their new neighborhood and feeling that renters don't have a vested interest in their own community. Then I found myself frustrated at the article about giving the Mr. Roboto center a stable future by raising funds to purchase a building. The first idea considered is to approach the current members parent's for money, rather than look for ways they could get members of the immediate community (lower income and black, i.e. not "punk") to participate and utilize the space as well. So, for me, this issue was a "mixed bag"—good intentions but leaving a bad taste… (MD)
Mike Q Roth / PP Box 8131 / Pittsburgh, PA 15217
hardtravelin@yahoo.com

HLUBOKA ORBA #25 / $6
8 x 11 – printed – 166 pgs – Czech
Wow, this fanzine is an excellent read, and has a great visual presentation. It proudly proclaims it mostly covers bands from so called "exotic" countries such as Iceland, Russia, Belarus, Brazil, and Japan. *Hluboka Orba* seems to be divided into chapters separated by these cool graphics, the first one being a guy pushing a concrete wall with his head. The bands highlighted are Malignant Tumour, the Russian band George Harrison, Iceland's Hrydjuverk, and Homo Consumens and their See You In Hell's Balken tour. Also included are articles on a squat in

Austria and our automobile culture. Finally, there are lots of new record reviews, a review of the *924 Gilman* book, and plenty of interesting ads. I only wish there had been a CD with this fanzine to have had a chance to hear some of the presented bands. (HH)
Filip Fuchs / Grohova 39 / 60200 Brno / Czech Republic
orba@seznam.cz

KISS MACHINE #11 / $5
7 x 8.5 – printed – 80 pgs
"The Shame Issue"—a fascinating subject, but like most zines of this style (read: arty with too much poetry) it's hit and miss. There are, however, lots of pieces of prose and articles to choose from amidst the poetry, so it's likely you will find more than a few things to catch your interest. Sex, relationships, drugs, dirty laundry, abuse, spying—what are *you* ashamed of? It's probably in here. (MD)
PO Box 108 / Station P / Toronto, ON M5S 2S8 / Canada
www.kissmachine.org

LAST BREATH #1 / $4
8 x 11 – printed – 52 pgs – Serbian
It is always so cool to see fanzines from Serbia considering all the shit the Serbs have been through these past years. People in the Serb scene have put this premier issue together many of them who now live abroad because of the wars. Included are interviews with Insted , Direct Control, Dead Scenestars, Prank Records, and I Object. Also included are a

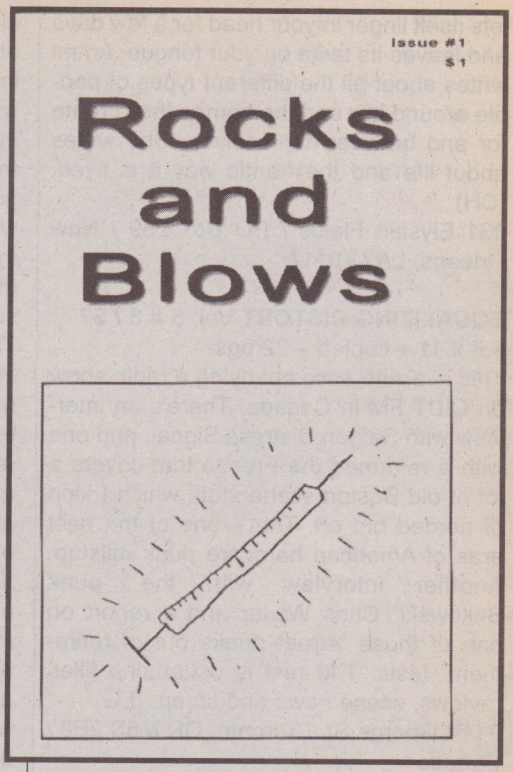
Greek scene report, a Dutch scene report, an Iceland scene report and plenty of new record reviews. This fanzine is an informative read from scene worth supporting. Thanks! (HH)
Nemanja Boskovic / V. Vlahovic D3 1/7 / 19300 Negotin / Serbia & Montenegro
yusxe@yahoo.com

LAST HOURS #11 / $4, £1.50
8 x 11 – printed – 116 pgs
Formerly known as *Rancid News* (no need to explain the name change, I reckon), *Last Hours* is a really classy looking punk fanzine. Interviews include such bands as Fighting Shit from Iceland (yes, Iceland is blowin' up!), Portugal's New Winds, The Profit$ (yeah!), and Against Me! reiterating how they're not sellouts just because they have guarantees, stay in hotels, and don't live up to the ideals that they used to sing about. *Last Hours* mixes it up by having plenty of non-band interviews, too, like Dave of *On Subbing* zine outta Portland, Marta and Jon of Active distro, and Welly of the band Four Letter Words and *Artcore* fanzine. You also get DIY articles on recipes and crafts, and how to put on a Ladyfest! The best part, though, is the articles section with some excellent coverage of politics and protests, including a great piece on a Kansan who invented his own ridiculous religion, Flying Spaghetti Monsterism, which he insisted be given consideration equal to that of "intelligent design" in Kansas's public schools. Oh, and a (serious) piece on the racism of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Well worth mailing away for. (PC)
PO Box 382 / 456-458 The Strand / London WC2R 0DZ / UK
www.lasthours.org.uk

NEGATIVE REACTION #2 / $4, 5€
7.75 x 11 – printed! – 36 pgs
Because of the large size and lack of ads, there's a lot of content inside, even though the print and layout aren't the tightest. It's pretty much interviews, reviews, and humor. The reviews were my favorite part, as they've got some good lines and they don't kiss ass, though there is one page written by someone else where every band is great, "should sell well," etc. The interviews aren't so strong; there's a new one with Hard Skin, talks with the Stagebottles, Moscow's Razor Bois, Deadline, Mere Dead Men, Argy Bargy, et al. Probably they're fine if you're into the bands, but they didn't pull me in. The humor was too close to typical lad style for my taste. The guide to England for American tourists was the best bit, explaining how to go cottaging in public urinals and the like. There is a good angry rant about the fucking system as well. Overall, it may be fine for fans, but the second *Negative Reaction* ain't nothing special. (JM)
20 New Front St. / T/Lea, Stanle / Co. Durham, DH9 9LY / England

NEUS SUBJEX #65 / SASE
3.5 x 8.5 – copied – 18 pages
It's like a big scene report in the smallest font imaginable, to fuck with your mind a little bit. Think *Slug and Lettuce* divided by two or three. My eyesight is really wimpy so I must admit to grazing over the report portion and going onto the larger stuff. Contains interview with the Hypochondriacs' drummer, a photo section—short and sweet, and reviews; it's all pretty keen. Ohio has independent/ punk music scene and *Neus Subjex* 65 is an ideal format to examine it through. (DS)
PO Box 18051 / Fairfield, Ohio 45018-0051

MAMAPHILES #2 / $4
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 70 pgs
This is a collection of heartfelt, honest, and self-reflective stories about motherhood that includes contributions from 26 "mama-zinesters." The authors vary radically in lifestyle choices and approaches to parenting, but the common threads of struggle and growth hold the collection together. The writing is generally pretty serious and, at times, dramatic. Although this zine risks being viewed as a project for mothers by mothers, I think it really deserves attention from the non-parental individuals among us. If we can get past the repetitive "I did this, and then this happened to me, and then I felt so [insert emotion]" writing style, this zine holds the potential to help us better understand what our mama-friends are going through, and be more aware of what being a parent is all about. There is a lot of craziness involved in being pregnant, giving birth, raising kids, and letting go that I've never seen people write about like this. It's also cool to see moms doing productive, creative projects and staying involved in the subculture/scene. (HB)
China Martens / PO Box 4803 / Baltimore, MD 21211
china410@hotmail.com
www.mamaphiles.com



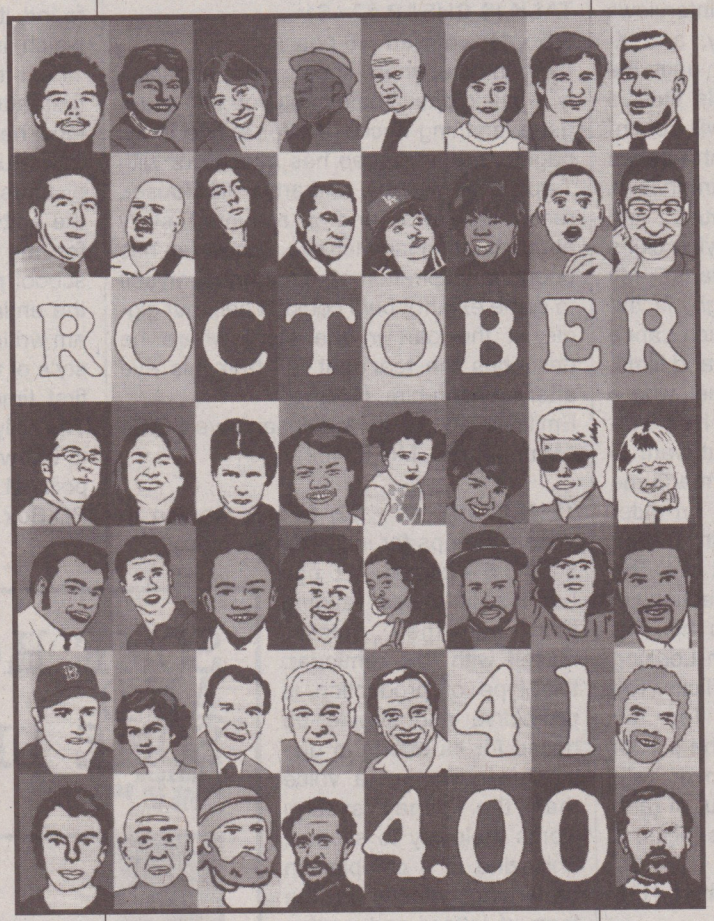
PENG KE SHEN ME / $?
7 x 10 – copied – 60 pgs - Chinese and English
This valiant first effort by Chinese punks to detail their young scene is written in both Chinese and English. There is an interview with Boston punk band Darkbuster

after their tour into China and Indonesia, followed by a list of do's and don'ts if your band has plans of touring in the southeastern part of this area. Included are a handful of stories, all punk related. The most charming addition of all, in my opinion, is the introduction to crust punk. It's broken down historically and intrinsically. Aficionados will likely have fun with it as well as folks new to the genre. This zine has promise, and is seeking contributors, so if you wish to help perpetuate the inclusion of people in far off places deeper into punk, perhaps you could be in touch with the people responsible for compiling this zine, and offer up some expertise. I had fun reading about the strange bands and reviews of old records. Trust me, it's full of surprises. (DS)
A. O'Brien / 217 Beach Rd / Lincolnville, ME 04849

PENSACOLA #5 / $1 + stamp
5.5 x 4.25 – copied – 32 pgs
A zineful of Candy's tales of growing up, love, friendship, bunnies...A non-fiction story should have some purpose other than to tell someone that something happened, but that's really all that you get in this zine, and most "per-zines" in general, I suppose. It's all typewritten text, no graphics. Not bad, just not great. (PC)
PO Box 1176 / NY, NY 10018
candy.grrrl@pinkpoodlezine.com

PLOPPYPANTS #4 / $1
5.75 x 8.25 – copied
A cool, visually overwhelming zine from Scotland. There are lots of weird little drawings, stolen comics, and mini clippings from comic books and ads. It came with a comp CD, but I'm not sure if that always comes with the zine or not. This issue features band interviews with two Scottish bands: OCD and the Neverland Sleepovers. The tone is pretty political, and there's a rant page where they talk shit about mortgage scam companies, scenesters, and supermarkets. The author of this wrote an overview/primer on Motörhead, which is kind of sweet. Also expect to find a no-bake chocolate cake recipe (yay!), zine reviews, record reviews, and a tour journal mostly of the UK variety. It looks like it was thrown/pasted together by teenagers on crank in the time it takes to listen to a Capitalist Casualties song, but you can tell it took a lot of time and effort to get the content together. This zine is really punk. (HB)
Roddy Ploppy Pants / Pillars of Hercules Organic Farm / Falkland, Fife, KY15 7AD / Scotland
www.problemrecords.tk / dirty_little_punk@hotmail.com

RAZORCAKE #28 / $3
8 x 10.5 – printed – 112 pgs
For those not familiar with *Razorcake*, it is a beefy, glossy-cover punk mag hailing from L.A. that has a lot of columns, and usually has interviews with current punk bands on the up and up. This particular issue has an interview with the filmmaker who is documenting the re-investigation of the Emmit Till case, *The Untold Story of Emmit Louis Till*, which was both informative and relevant. The Snakepit cartoon gives illustrated instructions on how to do stick-and-poke tattoos, which is tight. One columnist discusses the good and bad things about Starbucks, but doesn't really venture too far beyond the obvious. The bands interviewed include Zero Boys, the Downbeat 5, Holy Kiss, and This Moment in Black History. The cover photo/story is a huge twelve-page interview with Against Me!, including a big, awkward, full-color picture of them. The interview touches on topics such as what to wear on stage, Crass (how awesome they are/were), and losing touch. No word yet on corporate sponsorship vs. anarchist ideals except in a theoretical sort of way. There are also lots of record, zine, and book reviews. Good thing this one only comes out every two months 'cause there's so much to read. Good job. (HB)
PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042
www.razorcake.com



ROCKS AND BLOWS #1
8.5 x 5.5 – printed – 16 pgs
This is a non-fiction short story memoir zine that covers events that took place during writer David Franks' years of dealing with heroin addiction. It is both therapeutic for the writer and potentially helpful for others who have or are dealing with drug abuse. (BD)
1210 W. Montrose #2W / Chicago, IL 60613

ROCTOBER #41 / $4
8.5 x 11 – printed – 74 pgs
If you know *Roctober*, then I don't suppose I need to tell you much. It hasn't gone sour, in case you're wondering. If you don't know what I'm talking about, *Roctober* is a consistent, long running zine out of Chicago. It's quirky enough to stay interesting, but not so much that it ever becomes annoying. Issue #41 contains articles on Archie Bell and the Drells, Zolar X, and interviews with Skizz, Harvey Kubernik, and Gentleman John Battles as well as reviews-a-plenty. Good stuff. (AS)
1507 E. 53rd St. / Chicago, IL 60615

SLUG & LETTUCE #85 / free in person or postage
11.5 x 15 – printed – 20 pgs
I am constantly impressed with the longevity and resolve of *Slug & Lettuce*. I can't imagine that it's easy to do 85 issues of a punk fanzine without fail—working at *MRR* has just made me appreciate things like *S&L* that much more. This issue is full of Chris' amazing photography—the shots of BSA, Rambo, and Look Back And Laugh in particular are pretty spectacular. The rest of the elements that make *S&L* a punk mainstay are also firmly in place—

the extensive reviews section, the above-average columns, and Fly's awesome art. Great as always, and well worth your support. (GN)
PO Box 26632 / Richmond, VA 23261-6632

SOME HOPE AND SOME DESPAIR #8 / $3
8.5 x 11 – copied – 40 pgs
Man, Lance knows how to nerd out with the best of 'em! This, the eighth issue of his zine, is filled to the brim with excellent stuff. There is, of course, a bunch of anarcho stuff, including excellent interviews with Rudimentary Peni, Liberty, and X-Cretas—I for one cannot wait until the actual book compiling all of this stuff is published, but until then *MRR* will continue happily printing what Mr. Hahn sends us. There are also engaging interviews with the Husbands, the Because, and Radio 4 (where they discuss playing clubs and being professional musicians). My favorite part of this zine, though, is the extensive reviews section, in which Lance writes about his favorite records and films. This stuff has that true fanzine feel, where the writer is so totally into what he's writing about that you can't help but want to get into it too. His reviews even made me want to reconsider my opinions on older bands like the Adicts and Napalm Death, which I've never been able to get into. The same goes for the Top Tens section, in which Lance lovingly describes his Top Ten Anarcho Demo Tapes Worth Looking For, Top Ten Hong Kong Action Flicks, Top Ten Over-Rated Classics, and Top Ten American Directors. These are the sort of lists we all make and argue over with friends, and I totally got a kick out of (and argued in my head with) Lance's picks. A must have! (GN)
Honey Bear Records / 1730 E. Oltorf #135 / Austin, TX 78741
honeybearrecords@hotmail.com

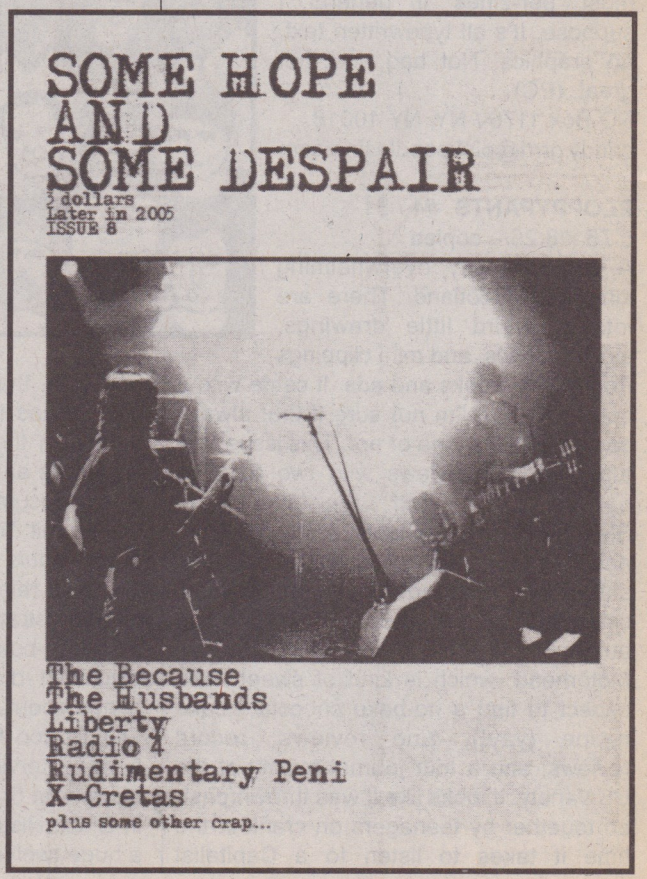
STRAIGHT SOB #8 & 9 / $?
5.5 x 8 – copied – 36 & 32 pgs
Both issues are all writing and band photos with no ads or reviews. They both also discuss traveling, punk, anarchy, books, and horticulture. The author seems to be a nerd for plants and books especially, if you are too I think you'd appreciate these. Number nine details his extended trip around Europe, and was my favorite of the two. He does a great job of using his travelogue as a starting point for his own ideas, combining the typical "went here, saw this" with his reflections on the issues listed above. Number eight has longer pieces on Appalachian coal mining and gentrification, and an interview with Brno, Czech thrashers See You In Hell. Mike struggles with the hope, inspiration, and frustration he gets from today's anarchists, and the conflict between his love of cities and his feeling that from an ecological standpoint, they're totally fucked. I found these zines to be better than most in this vein, and the more I read and went over them, the more I liked them. (JM)
Mike Schake / 63 Highland Rd. / Hackettstown, NJ 07840

TALK IS CHEAP #2 / $1
8.5 x 11 – copied – 6 pgs
I love a nice, short, simple zine; especially a music one. Sometimes you can really get everything necessary for a zine in six pages. *Talk is Cheap* has interviews with Tarpit, The Mistake, and artist Bill Houser, record reviews, and a reprinted story about meeting Ian McKaye. I know Ian has been the inspiration of many (even myself to some extent), but I couldn't help but giggle at the part in the story where he describes the tear that fell from his eye after meeting him. (CR)
Emil Gilmanon / 3044 Pleasant Ave SO #4 / Minneapolis, MN 55408

TENACIOUS #9 / $2, free to women in prison, stamps for incarcerated men
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 26 pgs
I got a little sad reading this, but then quieted myself with this reminder: this type of production is pro-active and should be hailed for its efforts in giving these women a voice that the penal system works tirelessly to silence. This zine is a compilation of writing, mostly in the form of letters and poetry, all by women behind bars. (DS)
Blackstar Publishing / PO Box 20948 / NY, NY 10009

TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #190 / $2
6 x 8 – printed – 32 pgs – Finnish
This issue features an interesting cover of wood block cuts, the usual cool black and white punk type graphics. Of course inside are thirty-two pages of raw Finnish punk. This issue has new record reviews and fanzine reviews. There are interviews with the bands Ensam, and Worth The Pain, plus a report from Tomina 2005, a Finnish punk fest. Finally, there are plenty of ads and everything else one wants to learn about the scene in Finland. (HH)
PL1 / 65200 Vaasa / Finland
jantsa@yahoo.com

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #77 / $1 plus 83 cent stamp or trade
8.5x5.5 – copied – 52 pgs
I guess this zine has been going for a really long time. 77 issues—that's insane. I found it a little dry and personality free, which is weird for such a long running zine; I felt that it read more like someone's first attempt. There are interviews with local heroes the Fucking Champs and the Low Budgets and some live Green Day pictures. There are reviews of every show the editor went to, which were really hard for me to actually read they were so school report styled. I always try to read the entire zine so I get a sense of what I am writing about, even if it isn't my favorite style of writing and I have to say this is the first time I actually struggled to do this. The only time I felt any kind of connection to the writer was in the last part about the political machinations of Katrina. (LG)
PO Box 1444 / Columbia, MO 65205-1444



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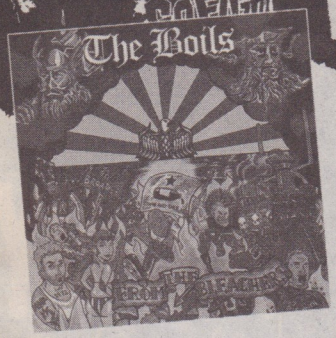

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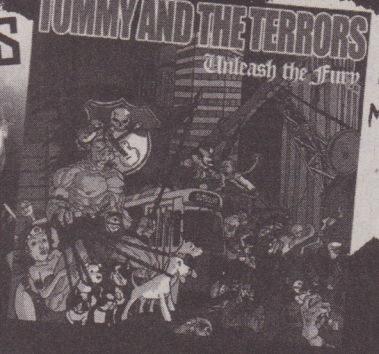

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I'M LOOKING FOR A VIDEO of The Casualties performing when Colin was in the band. That would be 1994 or before. I'm on a mission, and I would totally appreciate any help or suggestions. Please e-mail me at kateruby@gmail.com

SORRY TREES ISSUE NUMBER 2 Carpenter Ant, MDC part 2, and Our Time interviews, articles on zombie dogs, making natural dreads, 9/11 facts and more. $1 or trade to Sorry Trees / 13329 Winterstown Rd / Felton, PA 17322 / orkenbjorken@aol.com.

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